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# THE MONTH

AUGUST 1961

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BENEDICT HACKETT

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# WILLIAM FLETE

By

BENEDICT HACKETT

ST. THOMAS MORE in his *Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, written probably not long after his imprisonment on 17 April 1534, devotes a chapter to what he calls the daughter of pusillanimity, namely scrupulosity. The ex-Lord Chancellor puts his finger on this baneful problem of the spiritual life when he writes:<sup>1</sup>

the scrupulous person . . . of that which is no sin, maketh venial; and that that is venial imagineth to be deadly . . . and then he feareth that he be never full confessid, nor never full contrite, and then that his sins be never full forgiven him; and then he confesseth, and confesseth again.

Moreover, he (the devil) maketh him to take for sin some thing that is none, and for deadly, some such as are but venial, to the intent that, when he shall fall in them, he shall by reason of his scruple sin.

These passages, however, do not represent an original contribution to the theology of scrupulosity. Whether or not St. Thomas was aware of it, they are in fact derived from a treatise written not later than the summer of 1359 by William Flete, an English Austin friar.

Flete, if we can trust a contemporary writer who knew him personally in Italy, was born about 1310. There is reason for thinking that he was a native of Fleet in Lincolnshire and entered the Augustinian Order c. 1325. He appears to have studied theology at the concursory school attached to the Lincoln friary, and was later sent to Cambridge to qualify for the degree of master of theology. The earliest certain date in his career is 29 February 1352, when he was licensed for the diocese of Ely. Very probably he had been designated by the provincial chapter of 1351 to read for the degree of master of theology at Cambridge, which accounts for his residence there early in the following

<sup>1</sup> *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, Book II, xiv (ed. London 1847?), pp. 123-4.

year. At this period the English Austin friars experienced an awkward and at times acerbated situation over promotions to higher studies. An influx of foreign students added to the difficulty, though there can be no doubt that the extraordinary turn which Flete's vocation took was decisively influenced by his contacts with Italian *confrères* at Cambridge. In 1353 he appears to have entered upon the statutory year of opponency and was admitted to lecture on the Sentences at the beginning of the academic year 1354-5. Having duly completed the required course of lectures he proceeded to lecture on the Bible and to prepare for the final exercises leading to his inception as master. This was due to take place when the university resumed on 10 October 1358, but some time before 17 June he made it known that he was not taking his degree. Flete's movements during the twelve months that followed his renunciation of the coveted *magisterium* are uncertain. We do not know even if before leaving Cambridge he had set his heart on going out to Italy, or whether this resolve took shape and hardened some time later. At all events he left England with two companions on 17 July 1359, fully determined never to come back, no matter what the cost might be in terms of human feeling. His destination was the celebrated monastery of his Order at Lecceto outside Siena.

At Lecceto or *Selva del Lago* Flete from the day he was formally assigned the status of a conventual (8 September 1359) until his death some thirty years later lived the life of a true Hermit of St. Augustine. A Florentine writer has recorded the following notice of him fifteen years after his entry to Lecceto:

In Selva del Lago four miles from Siena there is a place of the friars hermits of St. Augustine in which there lives an English friar who is called the Bachelor of Selva del Lago, and has been there for more than twelve years. This is a man of great learning, a venerable man, of great sanctity and solitude. He lives mostly in the said wood in his cells which he himself has made in dark and rough places; and there he brings with him his books in order to escape the conversation of people. And to this place he goes, and comes from the church to the wood and from the wood to the church. This is a man of mature counsel, a friend of God, and a man of great example; and he speaks little except when necessity obliges him.

The accuracy of this sketch is vouched for by another contemporary, Ser Cristofano di Gano Guidini, who says perhaps all that need be said of Flete's reputation when he describes him as *un spiritualissimo religioso*.

Though Flete had to do violence to nature in order to withstand the pull of homeland and old friends, at Lecceto he had the compensation of winning the friendship of the three outstanding personalities of late *Trecento* Italian spirituality: St. Catherine of Siena, Blessed Giovanni Colombini, founder of the *Gesuali*, and Blessed Giovanni dalle Celle, the great penitent of Vallombrosa. It is arguable that Catherine's theological formation during the crucial years 1362-74 was mainly the work of William Flete. The predominant Augustinian character of her thought has been noted by Professor Dupré Theseider, and it is significant that Flete was the only authoritative theologian and spiritual master to whom Catherine could turn for guidance before Raimondo da Capua became her confessor and director in June 1374. Already, the Virgin of Fontebranda had written at least twenty-one letters which contain almost all the fundamentals of her spiritual doctrine.

Flete's last years were clouded by the painful memory of his estrangement from St. Catherine in 1379 when he refused to come to Rome to give direct moral support to Pope Urban VI. It must have been some consolation, however, that she not only forgave but fully reaffirmed her confidence in him before her death on 29 April 1380. In Siena his reputation as a man of sound judgment and exceptional holiness remained unshaken, and when he died c. 1390 the city regarded him as a saint.

Despite his limitations he was unquestionably one of the most remarkable figures in the history of late medieval English spirituality. He enjoys the distinction of being the only direct contact between the so-called English school of mystics and the Italian. Whether he himself was strictly speaking a mystic is open to question; certainly his extant writings afford little or no reason for believing that he was. It must be remembered, however, that none of his letters to St. Catherine have survived, while two to Giovanni dalle Celle and one each to the *Signorie* of Siena and Florence have likewise disappeared. Altogether five letters, a legend of St. Catherine's life set in the form of a lengthy sermon, an excellent summary of her spiritual teaching known as the

*Documento spirituale* (7 January 1377) and a treatise on the remedies against temptations constitute the sum total of his available literary work. The most valuable are three letters addressed to his English brethren and the opusculum, *De remediis contra temptationes*.

The setting and contents of the three letters which Flete addressed to the friars of his native province early in May 1380 have been discussed elsewhere<sup>1</sup>; it is not proposed to do more here than summarise the main points, except where the author should be allowed to speak for himself. His intention was not to plot a map of the religious life but to impress on the English Augustinians the necessity of reform and to show the direction it should take. The emphasis throughout is on the eremitical character of the order as exemplified in its official title, Hermits of St. Augustine. Flete insists that the friars should be "lovers of holy and solitary religion," and this line of thought which lies behind his own vocation to Lecceto and the peculiar mode of life he practised there show clearly that the English spiritual tradition fully harmonised with his view of things.

For Flete the precise sources and standards of Augustinian life are the Rule of St. Augustine and the constitutions of the Order. What he sets down as the principles of religious life are directly related to the opening chapters of the rule or rather to some of its significant passages. Augustine's maxim, "love God before all things" demands first and fundamentally that we keep the commandments. Love of one's neighbour, the second cardinal point, rules out at every level—provincial, community and personal—any species of discord. Union of spirit and oneness of soul, as prescribed by the rule, mean, says Flete, that the friars should preserve complete and lasting concord and that all without exception, as far as possible, say the divine office together in church with all diligence, distinctly, exactly, slowly and devoutly. These and the observance of the common life "are the principles of holy religion; they foster charity and edify the neighbour." His attitude to mendicant poverty is strict without being extreme; but he castigates those who would make their friaries stepping-stones to masters' degrees, honours, authority and easy living. Students need proper training in right values, and

<sup>1</sup> B. Hackett, O.S.A., "The Spiritual Life of the English Austin friars of the fourteenth century" in *Sanctus Augustinus vitae spiritualis magister*, ii (Rome, 1959) 482-92.



Flete admonishes the masters of theology to teach them not to lose the substance for the accident:

You ought to assist the priors so that all, both students and others, humbly obey them, and instruct the students not to lose the substance for the accident; as they advance in learning, let them more strictly uphold the Order and its observances. They should be more instant in divine things in so far as place and time allow, and make corresponding progress in morals. Otherwise, perhaps, their study will be to them a torment. Those who neglect observance for study waste their time and study, and in the end find themselves deluded and deceived. They should principally study not for a degree but out of obedience. Such an intention as studying for a degree is a corrupt intention. *Every corruptible work fails in the end.*

The masters themselves must be models of virtue. Some of them, for example Richard Brotherton, had been fellow-students with Flete; and it would be interesting to know how they reacted to this piece of pleading:

You more than all others are bound to be removed from worldly pomps, conditions and conversations, and to observe common poverty and the common life with the rest, just as the blessed Augustine did; and as place and time allow, stay in your rooms as in a hermitage, in solitary cells, and there apply yourselves to study, contemplation, devotion and prayer. There, when God inspires it, do your penances in secret so that henceforth a master's room be not like a tavern to the confusion of souls and the destruction of the Order, but for the edification of souls. Let it be a place of solitude and contemplation; otherwise you do not deserve to be reputed masters of the Order of St. Augustine, but worldly masters.

Flete considered nothing more disastrous for religious Orders than members who must always be out. If charity or necessity or obedience compels one to go somewhere and mix with people this may be tolerated; but, he writes, too many for no good reason spend the whole day away from their convents. Often there are more outside than inside the monastery: *aliquando plures sunt in foro quam in loco, pauci in choro.*

There is much other material in Flete's letters which might be cited for its wisdom and sound psychology, such as the formation of novices and occupational interests. Nothing, however, gives us a surer insight into his own mentality than his



teaching on charity. He begs the English provincial, Henry Teesdale apparently, to get the friars to preach charity:

Many religious are deceived, because they observe the husks of religion, namely silence and such-like external trappings, when going to chapter, to the refectory, etc., and lack charity. They envy others, discredit them, they murmur, blacken the reputation of others. They form parties or set one Order against another, or brother against brother because of a degree or state. Monks keep silence; they speak with their fingers but they don't observe charity by receiving our brethren or the Carmelites at the guest-house. They say that it is not their custom. A bad custom should be abolished. Let them beware lest Christ say to them: *I was a stranger and you did not take me in; go you cursed into everlasting fire*. Religious perfection does not consist in these external things: it is principally founded on works of charity and hospitality and such-like. The apostle says: *Be hospitable to each other without murmur*. Love hospitality. Religion is also based on obedience, patience, humility, meekness and the other interior—not exterior—virtues.

This spirited assessment of religious values is all the more impressive because it comes from one who himself led a life of dedicated asceticism. Flete appreciated fully the place which silence and bodily mortification hold in the Christian scheme, but he makes it quite clear that they are not the principal thing. The interior virtues, particularly obedience, patience, humility, meekness, and, above all, charity, are what matter. Ascetical practices and customs which clash with the claims of charity and lack interior balance he considers "vain and presumptuous." When he speaks of charity he means charity which is active, sincere and unselective; it is what St. Augustine calls *amor socialis*. Flete's hidden life at Lecceto and indeed each of his three letters to England prove beyond a shadow of doubt that he upheld the primacy of the contemplative life. He also held that the perfection of contemplation is achieved by works of charity such as hospitality.

The treatise on the remedies against temptations must have been written before Flete's departure from England on 17 July 1359. This short essay, on a subject which Abbot Vonier once complained still awaits a thorough theological study, became one of the popular spiritual manuals of the later Middle Ages in England. Thirty-seven Latin and English manuscripts survive,

and at least five more are unaccounted for. In fact the work must have had a much wider circulation, and so far we have identified not less than four recensions of the Latin and three of the English texts. Hilton appears to have studied it though in an interpolated text. St. Thomas More, as we saw above, was influenced by it; and Fr. Augustine Baker inserted a late Middle English recension of the text into his *Anchor of the spirit* (1628-9). Direct or indirect quotations appear in the *Discerning of spirits* and *Speculum christiani*, both of the fourteenth century, and in the *Of the direction of a man's life*, *Fervor amoris* or *Contemplations of the dread and love of God*, *Speculum spiritualium* and *Donatus devotionis*—all fifteenth-century compilations. At least one spiritual director c. 1400 drew heavily on it for a letter of counsel to a client, and complete texts of the treatise were acquired by priests, religious and laity.

The *De remediis* opens with a discussion on temptations against faith, "the foundation stone of the Church and origin of all virtues." We are shown how the devil attempts to undermine faith, and if unsuccessful will try to set up a state of continual doubt in the soul. His wiles are to be warily and spiritually resisted, and in attacks against faith and morals

a man should not wonder or dwell on them or stick at them or analyse or investigate much their causes, since the more one insists on analysing what is erroneous or false, the more he plunges himself into error. A man should not anger himself on account of such objects or blame himself or impute them to his own fault, because a temptation of faith or hope is most painful and grievous, the pain is hardest, the fault is least. To one who is faithful it is altogether involuntary and displeasing, and therefore painful and no sin. For every sin is voluntary and if not voluntary there is no sin according to Augustine.

None the less, a soul under stress of temptation may think itself alienated from God. On the contrary, as Isidore teaches, he thinks more of the soul because it praises him while suffering. Though the devil cannot tempt beyond the limits set by God, the just man is never free from his attentions, and under the stress of diabolical infestations of the mind and heart he may be brought to the point of despair. If, however, he continues to love and fear God, his sufferings in fact deepen his virtue.

Temptation sometimes takes the form of diffidence or hesita-

tion about matters of faith. This condition is the result of fear instilled by the devil, causing the soul to think it has committed grave sin when such is not the case:

hesitation in the faith in order to be sinful must be wilful and complacent or at least feigned ignorance, which tends more to error than truth. And therefore, since faith is a habit of the will, the will to believe is faith, the will to hope is hope and the will not to waver is firmness. *With the heart one believes unto justice.* For merit and demerit reside in the will which alone cannot be forced.

It may happen that the mind becomes so overclouded that a man cannot see what his will is. This should not upset him, since good works are a proof of goodwill, and they are always to be presumed good until the opposite is reasonably certain. If the temptation becomes really fierce, then we may on rare occasions declare our belief. But nobody should be deceived by the devil who is a liar; and in any case "the enemy is weak who only conquers the willing and this with a will which is deliberate, agreeable and fixed."

Flete offers a further explanation of mental obscuration in terms of natural philosophy. The Evil One explores each person's complexion or disposition and vexes in a spiritual way those who are prone to melancholy. Natural philosophers—Flete has Constantinus Africanus in mind—describe how the light of reason is obscured by a dark smoke rising to the brain which prevents the mind from seeing clearly. People so afflicted are sad and timid, pusillanimous and arid because of their complexion. They believe what is false to be true. And so, the devil assesses each man's weakness and tempts him accordingly. By agitating his complexion and instilling fear he succeeds in causing such despondency that life itself is regarded as a torture and death a release. At this point Flete assembles a cluster of apposite quotations from the scriptures and shows that trials and temptations are used by God to purify the soul. In the words of the *Ancrene Riwe*, one needs spiritual fortitude to bear like Job this bitterness patiently and humbly. Did not Christ himself suffer desolation? It is little indeed that we suffer in this moment of time in comparison with the eternal reward which we may hope to receive from God's mercy.

Spiritual people are singularly tried; but as long as goodwill

remains they cannot lose faith or hope; rather they are confirmed in every virtue:

This kind of temptation and the remedy is hinted at by the Saviour when he said to his disciples: *Behold Satan has sought to sift you like wheat*. A man is sifted when he is intimately and perfectly examined. On the other hand he is strengthened and perfected when confirmed in good through the virtue of patience and prayer and the wise counsel of his neighbour.

Flete also recommends prayer, recitation of the psalms, scripture reading, particularly the prophets and the gospels.

St. Catherine once criticised him on the grounds that he made too much of spiritual consolations. The charge does not seem to be quite just. In his *De remediis* Flete expressly teaches that the withdrawal or absence of sensible devotion makes for great progress in prayer. St. Bernard says that when we seek God He hides Himself in order that we may seek Him with more earnestness, and Augustine explains that the Lord does not deny His gifts but sometimes delays to give. By obliging us to ask, seek and demand He increases our capacity and turns our desires to greater things. At the beginning of their conversion certain souls experience a state of sensible sweetness, and then when they are solidly established in the love of God He withdraws this grace so that they may increase in merit and thus win a higher reward. Virtue, according to Aristotle, has to do with what is difficult; hence that which is acquired with greater difficulty is more virtuous. Developing this point, Flete introduces the Pauline distinction between the milk and solid food of Christ's doctrine:

At first God feeds some with the milk of sweetness and devotion and then He builds them up with the food of attrition and tribulation. It is indeed sweet and delightful to follow God when one is happy at heart and enjoys unruffled tranquillity of mind; but it is arduous and most perfect to follow God with entire desolation of heart and continual assaults against faith or mind. It was sweet and easy for Peter to be with Christ in His joyous transfiguration when he said: *It is good for us to be here*; but it was truly hard and frightening for Peter to be with Christ in His cruel persecution when he said: *I know not the man*. And yet he who was terrified by the voice of a servant-girl, when later fortified by the Holy Ghost, confessed Christ without hesitation unto death before the council of the leaders.

Once again Flete turns to the relationship between man's complexion or temperament and the passion of fear. He advises the sufferer not to withdraw into himself or search too deeply into things; it is best to open the mind to the right person, a man of discretion, and abide by his counsel. Sadness and pusillanimity are to be counteracted by the joy and *élan* which strength of soul and virtue produce; and in fits of depression and fear we should rouse ourselves with bursts of gladness and fun.

Some practical problems arise from the devil's ability to transform himself into an angel of light by suggesting vice under the guise of virtue and error under the cloak of truth. For example, he brings up thoughts of past sins when one is reading his breviary and urges on him the necessity of examining his conscience. The aim is simply to distract the reader. In this matter and at all times during prayer the one great remedy for getting rid of fantastic flights of imagination and spiritual temptations is to pay them no attention. At other times it is suggested that certain sins have not been forgiven or at least only doubtfully. The suggestion must be subtly declined even though an erroneous conscience may urge otherwise, since the devil's intention is not purity of conscience but turbulence in the soul: "though confession of sin is useful and necessary when demanded by true remorse and saving compunction, nevertheless it is of no use and unadvisable when suggested by a false and doubtful opinion." We must use discretion and follow the example of Christ who refused to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, choosing instead to walk down by the steps of discretion. Another artifice on the part of the devil is to perplex the mind by painting something as sinful and wrong which in reality is either good or indifferent, and as mortal something which is only venial. The idea is to unhinge the soul through repeated confessions and paralyse it from doing good by inducing a false conscience. It may happen that the devil will impel one to obey an erroneous conscience rather than submit to the judgment of a prudent man. Discretion is absolutely necessary; it is the hand which guides all the virtues and saves us from being deceived under the pretence of good.

As Augustine points out, it is often difficult to decide whether one is moved by a good or evil spirit. A good spirit inspires good, whereas an evil spirit deceives; it deceives even in things that are



manifestly good so as to win credence and then seduce the soul. We may regard, for instance, some thought or concept as our own when actually it is the devil's work. Here again it is essential not to insist on one's own opinion but regulate it by obedience to truth and discretion. Failing in his attempt to lead the soul astray, the Evil One turns to harass it with false fears and to instil the poison of his wickedness. We must manfully resist these deceptive suggestions and accept patiently and humbly the pain of mental anguish.

If he fails to bring a person to commit sin while awake, the devil has recourse to nocturnal visitations, oppressing the soul with various kinds of illusions and terrors in the form of dreams. God, as St. Gregory comments, allows the elect to undergo these trials so that even in their sleep they may have the reward of suffering. "Oh in what wondrous and varied ways," exclaims Flete, "is the soul of a God-fearing man driven and buffeted!" And he adds:

how pious and useful it is, how charitable and salutary to comfort and strengthen one so troubled and afflicted, who is passing, moreover, through the fire of trial and the water of tribulation, and to lead him forth into the refreshment of quiet and consolation, which quiet and consolation so desired in spirit even if the one thus troubled may not immediately obtain it or must certainly go without it for a long time, let him firmly hope that he must finally have it, *because many are the tribulations of the just and from all these the Lord will deliver them.*

By way of postscript and as an expression of the underlying spirit of his study, Flete recites in full the sixth and most moving chapter of the *Stimulus amoris*, which sounds the depths of God's mercy in allowing men to be tempted, and where those who are afraid to go to Christ because of their wickedness are recommended to place themselves in the hands of Our Lady who will grant them their request.

The value of Flete's treatise on temptation can best be judged by comparing it with those of other medieval writers on the subject. The treatment is sober, restrained, sympathetic and grounded on sound theological and psychological principles. The style is straightforward and devoid of the imagery and anecdote that mar the otherwise useful and indeed valuable works of medieval writers on the vices and virtues. Flete's deficiencies,

however, are obvious enough; apart from faults of loose construction and repetition, he completely overlooks the steadying and energising influence of the sacraments of penance and holy eucharist on the soul under trial. Here as elsewhere he reflects the spiritual attitude of his time. Yet one must regret that he did not set down in writing his views on the wider aspects of the spiritual life, for he was exceptionally well qualified by theological training and personal experience of the secret and deep movements of the soul. His real significance lies no doubt in the peculiar story of his vocation to Lecceto. Newman had perhaps more reason than he realised for assigning William Flete a place in his projected lives of the English saints.

## 'A MOST PASSIONATE WAR'

*Some Reflections on a Left-Wing View  
of the Spanish Civil War*

By

SIR ARNOLD LUNN

"THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR," writes Mr. Hugh Thomas in a brilliant if biased study of that tragic struggle,<sup>1</sup> "was, for the Western World at least, a most passionate war. . . For intensity of emotion, the Second World War seems less of an event than the Spanish War. The latter appeared a 'just war,' as civil wars do to intellectuals, since they lack the apparent vulgarity of national conflicts."

Why did the Civil War arouse such passions among the intellectuals of the Left? Not, of course, because they disapproved of *all* attempts to reverse by violence the verdict of a democratic electorate. As indeed I pointed out in the course of a debate with Mr. Richard Crossman before the students of a summer school in Zurich. I was defending the thesis that Socialists have no real

<sup>1</sup> *The Spanish Civil War*, by Hugh Thomas (Eyre and Spottiswoode 42s).



principles. In 1931 King Alfonso abdicated, and a Left-wing government ruled in Spain until 1933 when the electorate decisively repudiated Socialism and Communism and returned to a predominantly Conservative government. Whereupon a few months later the Asturian miners rose in armed revolt and, to quote Mr. Thomas, "successfully established a revolutionary Soviet throughout their province" (p. 81). This attempt to reverse by violence the verdict of the electorate was applauded not only by Mr. Crossman and *The New Statesman* but also by the Liberal Press which, as Mr. Chesterton remarked, "loudly lamented over the unfortunate failure of those Socialistic Fascists to reverse the results of the General Election." Three years later Socialists and Liberals were profoundly shocked when the Spanish Nationalists followed the precedent set by the Spanish Socialists in 1933, but in 1945 when the Greek Communists rose in armed revolt against a democratic government, the elections for which had been supervised by the Allies, Mr. Crossman and his friends once again decided that electoral verdicts could be reversed by violence.

Such was the substance of my remarks at Zurich. Mr. Crossman replied that he had been consistent in wanting the Left to win. And this, I suppose, is a principle of sorts. A more recent example of the ambivalent attitude of the Left to dictatorships was the theme of a letter of mine to *The Times* in which I wrote:

In your issue of April 6th Mr. Denis Healey, Labour spokesman on foreign affairs, is stated to have taken strong exception to Lord Home's coming visit to Spain and Portugal. Would Mr. Healey be equally distressed if a leading Socialist visited Russia or Red China? Does he object to dictators as such or is his protest yet another example of that selective indignation which is so common among Socialists?

A disinterested enthusiasm for any particular system is rare among ambitious politicians who are naturally biased in favour of that form of government which gives them the best chance of achieving power. Thus, as Burke pointed out, the real object of the Jacobins was not to substitute a new form of government for monarchy, or even to redress the grievances of the poor, ready though they were to exploit these for their own purposes, as to transfer power and privileges from the landed gentry who provided the Army with officers to "tradesmen, bankers, advocates . . . and those cabals of literary men called Academies."

Whereas the feudal leader led his troops into battle and was compelled by the code of his caste to imperil and, if need be, to sacrifice his life, the only sacrifice demanded from the new type of leader who emerged from the French Revolution was the occasional sacrifice of his principles.

A neglected aspect of political history since the French Revolution has been the struggle for power between those who do not shrink from the ordeal by bullets and those who emerge with success from the ordeal by ballots. What was best in feudalism still lingers among the bullet men who are always the first to volunteer for front-line service in a crisis, who are naturally conservative and who tend to despise all politicians. The feudal tradition still lingers in the Conservative Party, and it was not wholly an accident that of the eleven members of Parliament killed in the Second World War, ten were Conservatives. Left-wing intellectuals, pacifists and conscientious objectors have in general more affinity with ballot men than with bullet men, for whereas the bullet men tend to despise the ballot men, the ballot men dislike and secretly envy the courage of the bullet men, envy which is often expressed in derision, as for instance in Low's Blimp cartoons, and in phrases such as "the apparent vulgarity of national conflicts."

It is impossible to summarise in a paragraph what I believe to be an important factor in political controversy without oversimplification—many Left-wing intellectuals fought gallantly in both world wars—but it is, I believe, no less impossible fully to understand the hatred of General Franco in Left-wing circles if one is unaware of the rivalry between bullet and ballot men.

In Spain the ballot men won the General Election of 1936 but proved wholly unable to control those who hoped by a policy of political assassination to prepare the way for a dictatorship of the proletariat. A month before the outbreak of the Civil War a Spanish lady whom I know attended a political meeting addressed by a Conservative. An armed thug walked into this meeting, pulled out a revolver, shot and killed the Conservative speaker, and blinded my friend for life. A few days later the acquittal of the murderer by a popular court of justice was received with delirious applause. It was to put an end to this anarchy that the Nationalists rose in armed revolt, and this of course was very undemocratic of them. According to the rules of the ballot game

the defeated minority should have submitted to the will of the sovereign people and allowed themselves to be murdered or blinded for life without anything more effective than a protest in the Spanish Parliament. It was monstrous that the Nationalists should attempt to reverse by bullets a result achieved by ballots.

## II

Mr. Hugh Thomas, whose fascinating book on the Spanish Civil War is by far the most comprehensive and best documented that has yet been published, is too young to remember the Civil War, but as a Left-wing writer and former Labour candidate for Parliament he shares the violent prejudice of his Party against General Franco. My quarrel with Mr. Thomas does not derive from his obvious bias but from his rash claim to be unbiased. In the preface he describes himself by implication as "a dispassionate observer," and allows his publishers to advertise the book as an "objective" study of the war. It would be difficult for anyone who was actually involved in the war to be unbiased. I certainly do not pretend to have been. I remember an afternoon in the cemetery of Huesca which had just been liberated. The chapel of Our Lady had been turned into a bar, and obscene drawings were on the walls. I do not pretend to have been a "dispassionate" observer of these and similar horrors, but then I *saw* them, and Mr. Thomas has only read about these things. He records some of the atrocities in Republican Spain, the evidence for which cannot be denied, but he has no imaginative realisation of what these things meant to Spanish Catholics. Nobody with any understanding of the situation in Spain at the beginning of the war could possibly write, as does Mr. Thomas, that General Franco on 17 July 1936 had started "on the first stage of a journey which would lead him to supreme power in Spain but which he would almost certainly not have begun had he known how long it would last" (p. 129). It would be just as perceptive to write "Churchill would certainly not have refused a compromise peace in 1940 had he known how long the World War would last." To a Spanish Catholic in 1936 the prospect of Communists in control of Spain was no less a horror than the possibility of Hitler in control of England to Englishmen in 1940.

Mr. Thomas's knowledge of published sources is unrivalled, but much that took place in the Civil War has never been and

probably never will be published. The story, for instance, of the attempt made at the end of the war to persuade King Alfonso to return and claim the throne. Again, it was not until Mr. Peter Kemp published his book, *Mine Were of Trouble*, the best book that the Spanish Civil War has yet produced, that the German plot to assassinate General Franco was alluded to in print. I told the story at greater length in my own book, *And Yet So New*. Mr. Thomas makes no reference to this plot, and yet General Franco's knowledge that Hitler approved the plot to assassinate him certainly did not improve the German chances to lure Spain into the war.

Again, Mr. Thomas's sneer that Alfonso XIII "had abandoned the Spanish throne—to avoid, as he put it (somewhat exaggerating his own importance in the minds of his people) the disaster of a civil war" (p. 3), gives no true picture of what happened. The King abdicated after municipal elections had given him a large majority in the country as a whole. The anti-monarchist minority was, however, largely concentrated in the big towns. It was not to avoid civil war but to avoid the comparatively few casualties which would have been inevitable had the King ordered the municipal guard to fire on rioters which was responsible for the King's tragically unfortunate decision. The King and his cousin, the Infante Alfonso de Orleans-Bourbon, spent several weeks in Mürren in the winter of 1931-2. The Infante showed me the journal which he had kept during the fateful days succeeding the abdication, the journal in which he recorded a prediction which was to be tragically fulfilled a few years later. He told the King that if he gave orders for his civil guards to fire, a few might be killed, but that if he abdicated a million would die before peace returned to Spain.

I can add an interesting detail to Mr. Thomas's account of the actions taken by Señor Juan F. de Cárdenas, the ambassador of Republican Spain in Paris at the outbreak of the war. I saw a great deal of him when he was Nationalist agent in U.S.A., and later ambassador in Washington. He told me that he postponed resigning as ambassador and joining the Nationalists until he could himself convey to Blum the Republicans' urgent request for a maximum amount of military assistance. Blum made it clear that he would stop at nothing to help the Republicans, and gave the impression that France might provide not only munitions

but also men. Señor Cárdenas took immediate steps to communicate Blum's rash promises to the British ambassador in Paris, with the result that Blum was warned immediately by the British Government that if Germany reacted to French intervention in Spain by declaring war, France could not count on British assistance. Cárdenas having rendered this single service to the Nationalists resigned as Republican Ambassador.

I should be interested to discover why Mr. Thomas refers to Frank Ryan as "absurdly chivalrous" (p. 348). Ryan fought in the International Brigade in Spain, and during the Second World War is alleged to have volunteered to fight for the Nazis. Early in the war Ryan and Sean Russell, another well-known Republican leader, were being taken in a German submarine to Ireland. On the way Russell died and the submarine turned back. Ryan subsequently died of T.B. and is buried in Dresden. The *Dublin Evening Herald* (4 May 1961) published a paragraph on him and a photograph of his grave. After he got to Germany Ryan was certainly "in" with the Nazi authorities, but it is impossible to say whether he was really converted to their doctrines or just wanted to use them to help the Republican movement in Ireland.

I caught a fleeting glimpse of Ryan under strange circumstances. In 1938 I learned that many British members of the International Brigade were in prison at Lerida. I obtained permission to visit them in the hope that I might be of some service to them. The prisoners had apparently heard that an Englishman was visiting them, and as I entered the large room where they were awaiting me I saw one of them being bundled out of the room by two guards. "They want to stop me seeing you," shouted the prisoner, and I recognised the note of fear in his voice. The prisoner in question was Frank Ryan who was under sentence of death. He was accused, so his fellow-prisoners told me, of running amok and killing civilians when the Republicans captured Teruel. I report what they said and do not wish to identify myself with the charges brought against Frank Ryan. I wrote personally to General Franco to intercede on his behalf, but do not suggest that this had any influence on the decision to reprieve him.

### III

There is a specious suggestion of scholarly impartiality about any book which is obviously the product of patient and scholarly



research. It is tempting to assume that an author who has all the necessary knowledge to pass judgment will normally render an unbiased verdict. A reader who knew very little about the Civil War before he opened this book would find it easy to accept the publishers' claim that it is the first history of the Civil War that is "both objective and comprehensive." It is therefore all the more important that this claim to objectivity should not be dismissed in a few lines but refuted in detail, even at the cost of wearying the reader.

An objective historian would surely begin by discussing what would have been the probable consequences of a Republican victory, and what were the actual consequences of the Nationalist victory to Spain's attitude during the Second World War. There is something uncanny about the consistency with which Left-wing commentators fail to predict the future. Every Left-wing supporter of the Republic insists that General Franco would fight with Germany if and when the war came. In the epilogue to this book Mr. Thomas is generous in his recognition of Franco's success in keeping Spain out of the war.

Even his worst enemies [writes Mr. Thomas] would not deny that Franco's achievement in keeping Spain out of the war was a remarkable one. This is the most obvious way in which Franco differs from the popular image of the imperialist, expansionist Fascist dictator. Hitler and Franco eventually met at Hendaye in 1940. Franco, insisting on his after-luncheon siesta, kept the Führer waiting half an hour—an unprecedented event. And Hitler later said that he found Franco so unyielding that he would prefer to have three or four teeth out than have another such interview (p. 619).

In the autumn of 1944 I was invited by the secretary of the Cambridge Union to oppose the motion that "the victory of Franco was a disaster for Europe." Never had Franco been less or Stalin more popular than at the end of the Second World War, and we fully expected that this anti-Franco motion would be carried by about three to one. Actually we defeated the motion by nearly two to one. It would be far easier to defeat a similar motion to-day, for who but a Communist or a fellow-traveller would wish Spain to be a Russian satellite? Mr. Hugh Thomas appears to accept and certainly does not criticise the following figures given in a circular F.A.I. (Spanish Anarchist Federation) of September 1938: "Of 7,000 promotions in the Army since

May 5th, 500 had been Communists. In the Army of the Ebro out of 27 brigades, 25 were commanded by Communists, while all 9 divisional commanders, 3 army corps commanders, and the supreme commander (Modesto) were Communists" (p. 550).

Had the Republicans won, the army, dominated by Communists, would have taken control.

Mr. Thomas has read almost every important source, but he is not completely objective in his use of those sources. Thus he tells us that he had "relied heavily upon Señor Salvador de Madariaga's *Spain*" (p. xix). Señor de Madariaga was Republican Ambassador in America, a bitter enemy of General Franco and a hostile critic of the Spanish Church. Yet he concedes, in effect, that the Nationalists were only just in time to prevent a Marxist dictatorship.

It was not against the Fascists that Señor Largo Caballero's gunmen shot, but against their brother Socialists whose crime was that they wanted a Popular Front Government. Much ink has been wasted in discussing whether a rising of the Extreme Left was being prepared when the Army officers rebelled against the State. Largo Caballero never made a secret of it. It was his avowed, nay his proclaimed policy to rush Spain on to the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Thomas also claims to "have relied heavily upon Professor Allison Peers' *The Spanish Tragedy*," but I cannot trace a single quotation from this book. What is certain is that Mr. Thomas nowhere quotes the striking tributes to the Spanish Church from the pen of this distinguished Anglican.

According to the most conservative estimate, an estimate which Mr. Thomas naturally prefers to Claudel's "seize mille prêtres massacrés," 12 bishops, 283 nuns, 5,255 priests, 2,492 monks and 249 novices were killed, in all a total of 7,937 religious. The fact that a substantial minority of the Basques who fought as allies of the Republicans were practising Catholics was the best that Republican propagandists could produce as counter-propaganda, whereas, of course, any objective historian would recognise in the Basque tragedy yet another example of the fact that where religious and racial loyalties clash it is normally the religious loyalties which are forgotten. And one need not be an expert on Soviet history to realise that centralisation is the essence

<sup>1</sup> *Spain*, pp. 348-9.



of Communism and that if the Communists had won in Spain, Basque separatism would have been crushed as thoroughly as the separatism of the Ukrainians, Georgians and other subject races in Soviet Russia.

It is therefore sanguine of Mr. Thomas to assume that Catholic readers of his book will be impressed by the unsupported statements of Señor Manuel de Irujo, a Basque who served as Minister of Justice in the Republican Government after the fall of Bilbao. This gentleman who would seem to have had long conversations with Mr. Thomas, was clearly embarrassed by the fact that the Government which he served only permitted Mass to be celebrated at the headquarters of the Basque government in exile in Barcelona.

There is, as Mr. Thomas but not necessarily Señor Manuel de Irujo is aware, a disturbing parallel between Republican Spain during the war and Elizabethan England, where Mass was only tolerated in the embassies of Catholic powers such as France, and if Mr. Thomas was less uncritical in his acceptance of Republican propaganda he would surely not have quoted on the authority of Irujo the absurd statement that the Vatican "were not at all enthusiastic for the formal re-establishment of religion in the Republic—since this would have weakened the Catholic writing of Franco's cause. The Archbishop of Tarragona, for instance, apparently was willing to return to his cathedral but was refused permission to do so" (p. 495). Even more grotesque is the statement on the authority of the same witness that "The Vicar-General of Barcelona forbade the opening of any church and allowed it to be known that he would refuse licences to priests who heard [*sic*] Mass" (footnote, p. 495).

It is disconcerting to be reminded of the melancholy fact that writers of undoubted distinction often have as little real understanding of the Church which gave Europe her noblest culture as most of us have of Asiatic religions. Mr. Thomas is a case in point, and it is a pity that the proofs of this book were not read by a Catholic if only to remove from its pages such patent absurdities as the statement that once the Vatican had recognised the Nationalists as the government of Spain "any Catholic who sided with the Republic or who even, like Maritain, preached that the Church should be neutral, became technically rebels against the Pope" (p. 451). And certainly a Catholic reader of

these proofs would have discouraged Mr. Thomas from deeming it worth while to comment on the fact that "the Vatican had not condemned the Basque priests as heretics" (p. 603).

In his anxiety to discredit the contemporary Church in Spain Mr. Thomas does not shrink from quoting sources which are both anonymous and probably tainted. "Yet one priest who, alongside the death of no fewer than 1,215 monks, nuns and priests (55 were nuns) in the province of Barcelona, managed to escape to France through the help of President Companys, was *generous enough* to admit that 'the Reds have destroyed our churches, but we first had destroyed the Church.'" (p. 175. *Italics mine.*)

This "generous" statement was a small return to Companys who had helped this unnamed priest to escape the fate of the 1,215 monks, nuns and priests who preferred martyrdom to apostasy. It should be noted that though Rome has the names of thousands of priests who were massacred, Claudel's "*pas une apostasie*" is very near the truth.

It is instructive to contrast the verdict of the priest who paid for his life in a currency which the persecutors of the Church could use, with the verdict of Professor Allison Peers. "If the religious orders are distrusted it is not by the poor, the sick and the hungry."

I have no space to quote Professor Peers's tributes to the outstanding contribution of the Church to education. These were quoted in my book *Spanish Rehearsal*, which is included in Mr. Thomas's bibliography.

#### IV

By way of preface to what follows let me distinguish between what I have to prove and what I am definitely not trying to suggest. I criticise Mr. Thomas for an uncritical acceptance of many attacks both on the Nationalists and on the Spanish Church, and I give him full credit for the objectivity with which he records many facts which are embarrassing to the Republicans and those who bitterly regret their defeat. Mr. Thomas makes no attempt to deny that horrible atrocities were committed in the Republican territory. Of the many examples which he gives I quote the following (p. 174): "In Cernera, rosary beads were forced into monks' ears till their tympanum was perforated. Several priests were undoubtedly burned alive."

"The parish priest of Navalmorales, for example, told the militiamen who took him prisoner, 'I want to suffer for Christ.' 'Oh do you,' they answered, 'then you shall die as Christ did.' They stripped him and scourged him mercilessly. Next, they fastened a beam of wood on their victim's back, gave him vinegar to drink, and crowned him with thorns. 'Blaspheme and we will forgive you,' said the leader of the militia. 'It is I who forgive and bless you,' replied the priest. The militiamen discussed how they should kill him. Some wished to nail him to a cross, but in the end they simply shot him. His last request was to be shot facing his tormentors so that he might die blessing them" (p. 173).

Was this priest, in Mr. Thomas's view, one of the priests of whom he writes, "The Spanish working class attacked churchmen because they thought them hypocrites and because they seemed to give a false spiritual front to middle-class society or upper-class tyranny"?

That a saintly priest such as the priest of Navalmorales might provoke the same satanic hatred as Christ provoked is a hypothesis which Mr. Thomas would do well to consider.

As the horrible atrocities on the Republican side cannot be denied, Mr. Thomas follows the precedents set during the Civil War by arguing that in effect it was a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other. This leads him to forget the role of manufactured atrocities in war propaganda and to reject the principle which objective historians observe, the principle that no atrocity should be accepted which is not supported by weighty evidence. This principle is of decisive importance in the case of accusations made by Communists, fellow-travellers and their dupes. A Communist always has the clearest of consciences when lying on behalf of his cause, for the Communist acts consistently on the principle, falsely attributed to the Jesuits, that the end justifies the means. E. Yaroslavsky in his book, *Red Virtue*, sums up in a few words the guiding principle of Communist propaganda. "What coincides with the interests of the proletarian revolution is ethical." Mr. Thomas admits that many stories of the alleged Nationalist atrocities were "invented for propaganda purposes," and adds: "Arthur Koestler, then working with the propaganda department of the Comintern in Paris, later described how such distortions were deliberately written into his book,

*The Spanish Testament*, by his superior, the Czech impresario of propaganda, Otto Katz," but though Mr. Thomas draws attention to the manufacture of alleged atrocities by Republicans he attaches weight to allegations of atrocities prepared by "the respectable council of lawyers in Madrid," and never asks himself what would have been the fate of these respectable men had they failed to provide the allegations which their Red masters desired (p. 168).

What is the use of quoting Republican estimates of alleged Nationalist atrocities which even Mr. Thomas concedes to be exaggerated?

"The Madrid Council of Lawyers," Mr. Thomas writes (p. 168), "reported that in the first weeks of the war 9,000 workers were killed in Seville (20,000 by late 1937), 2,000 in Saragossa, 5,000 in Granada, 7,000 in all Navarre and 400 in Algeciras. A Catholic deputy and the head of the English Catholic College at Valladolid have separately testified to the deaths of 9,000 persons in that city." Who appointed this Council of Lawyers? What exactly did it consist of? When did it publish its report? How could lawyers in besieged Madrid and cut off from Nationalist Spain form any estimate of the number of executions in Nationalist Spain? Did the Catholic deputy and the head of the English Catholic College at Valladolid independently arrive at the same nice round figure of 9,000 which by a curious coincidence is the same figure as that quoted for the executions in Seville? Has Mr. Thomas been in touch with either of these witnesses? Mr. Thomas bases his statement on the authority of a private informer whom he does not name. I spent some days in 1950 in the English College in Valladolid, and the Rector described with gratitude the battle in which the Nationalists had saved priests in Valladolid from the same fate as that of the martyrs in Red Spain. Is it not absurd to quote the estimate of a British journalist, the correspondent of a pro-Republican paper who was "unfortunately kept in Madrid," that 100,000 prisoners had been executed by the end of 1939? (p. 607).

Mr. Thomas states that "Nearly all officers of the Republican Army were shot if captured" (p. 607). I remember asking the Infante Alfonso what happened to officers who fought for the Republicans. What he told me at the time, he has since confirmed in a letter dated 8 May 1961 from which I quote:

I sat on Courts Martial in Madrid when our War ended week after week. We in the Air Force dealt only with Red Air Force prisoners and Air Force activities. Not one single one of those we judged in the Courts I attended was executed though several were condemned to death. All Red Air Force Officers lost their jobs. How could one accept them to command (if of higher rank) our loyal officers? It would have wrecked discipline. The bulk of the condemned received a sentence of three years and one day prison which automatically takes an officer out of the Air Force List.

The 100,000 Reds which you write Thomas estimates is absurd. The reason why relatively few Reds were executed after the Civil War is that the worst murderers fled to France as we advanced in Catalonia. We had all sorts of murderers, we call "the worst" those who did not simply shoot a woman or child but who tortured them first, or those who, for instance, buried a priest or nun alive, etc.

I might add that the Infante Alfonso, who was educated in England and who married a British Princess, never hesitated to criticise in our talks what he thought to be wrong on the Nationalist side.

Nobody denies that there were unjustifiable executions on the Nationalist side and that many prisoners were shot. During the First World War the myth that a Canadian prisoner had been crucified by the Germans obtained fleeting credence, and for some time the Canadians ceased to take prisoners. The fact that priests were shot, tortured, burnt alive, and at least in one case crucified, is not a myth. The Nationalists were naturally inflamed by these horrors. But there was nothing on the Nationalist side to correspond to the odious system of torture which existed in Republican Spain, no official, for instance, whose duties were similar to those of the Servicio de Investigación Militar (S.I.M.) which operated in Barcelona and which, according to Mr. Thomas, "employed all the odious tortures of the N.K.V.D. Cells were made so small that prisoners could hardly stand, being paved with bricks set on edge. Powerful electric lights were available to dazzle, noises to deafen, baths to freeze, irons to burn, clubs to beat" (p. 493).

Mr. Thomas may well have been both startled and genuinely shocked when he discovered the full extent and the full horror of the atrocities committed in Republican territory. He was too honest a historian to conceal these facts, but he just could not



accept the fact that Republicans were in any respect incomparably worse than the Nationalists. Consequently he welcomed uncritically charges against the Nationalists for which no adequate evidence is offered.

He seems to me almost equally uncritical in his acceptance of statistics, quoted on p. 367 of his book, of the alleged social progress in Republican territory, statistics for which he offers no corroboration. In April 1938 I was attached to press photographers during the Nationalists' advance to the Mediterranean. A Frenchman drew my attention to the contrast between the look of the land in Nationalist Spain and in the territory which had just been reconquered from the Republicans. Peasants in Republican Spain appeared to have lost heart. This impression was reinforced by the hilarious joy with which the liberating army was received. My companion was a war correspondent whose sympathies were with the Republicans, but he made one significant admission. "One thing is certain," he said to me as we entered a village which had just been liberated, "these people are delighted to see the last of the Reds."

A minor indication of Mr. Thomas's bias is the contrast between his attitude to those who changed sides in the course of the war. Mr. Thomas realises that "thousands of Spaniards first fought on one side or the other entirely because of the accident of where they were in July 1936" (p. 355). From which it follows that it is certainly not objective to criticise a Spaniard as "treacherous" because he seizes the first opportunity to join those with whom he naturally sympathises, and yet the noun "treachery" or the adjective "treacherous" is applied three times (pp. 401, 445, 446) to a Basque Major who took an early opportunity to join the Nationalists. On the other hand, Antonio Bahamonde "for a year propaganda chief to Queipo de Llano in Seville fled abroad sickened by the job" (p. 168), without being accused by Mr. Thomas of "treachery." A book by Jesús Hernández (p. 217, footnote) is described as "this unpleasant work of the leading Communist renegade." The ugly word "renegade" would never be applied by Mr. Thomas to a Catholic who attacked the Catholic hierarchy in Spain, Bernanos for instance.

The most striking example, however, of bias and of Mr. Thomas's readiness to believe the worst of the Nationalists in general and Franco in particular is the unpardonable insinuation

that General Franco may have been responsible for the death of General Mola who was serving under his command.

"Inevitably," writes Mr. Thomas, "a question mark surrounds the manner of Mola's death. Was there, perhaps, a time-bomb in the aeroplane? Certainly there were many who might have desired the death of Mola—Franco among them. . . . Faupel described Franco as 'undoubtedly relieved by the death of Mola'" (p. 444).

No historian with any claim to be regarded as "objective" would adopt the base device of insinuating horrible charges, in this case not only murder but treachery, without supporting the charge with anything which could possibly be construed as evidence.

## V

It is odd that most of those who criticise Neville Chamberlain for continuing to hope that it would be possible to avoid a war by coming to terms with Hitler do not criticise Sir Winston Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt and Lord Attlee for making the same mistake about Stalin. And whatever may have been Chamberlain's misjudgments about Hitler, he realised from the first that if the Republicans had won, Spain would have become a Soviet satellite. It was Chamberlain who suggested that a supporter of the Nationalists should spend some time in Spain and write a book which could be sent by the National Book Club to every Conservative M.P. My book, *Spanish Rehearsal*, was the result of this suggestion, and whatever may be the demerits of the book, I cannot help feeling that the title, at least, had some merit, for the Civil War was a rehearsal for the attempt of the Communists to obtain control first of Europe and finally of the world. It was indeed a rehearsal for what is now taking place, and the leaders of the West might learn much from a war in which the Communists were decisively beaten.

Mr. Thomas himself might do well to reflect on the fact that the Nationalists, whom he so much dislikes, at least succeeded in saving their country from Communism, whereas the overwhelmingly powerful war coalition of free nations failed to save from Communist domination their ally Poland, to say nothing of all the other countries that Russia and China have annexed since the ending of the Second World War.



For this reason the Civil War is still relevant to the problems of a world which has signally failed to solve the problem of halting, to say nothing of hurling back, the advancing forces of militant Communism. It is therefore all to the good that a young writer of undoubted talent should have devoted the necessary time to produce the most comprehensive history of the Civil War that has yet been published. I have felt it necessary to refute in detail the various uncorroborated charges against the Nationalists to whom free Europe owes such a debt, but I am fully aware of the merits of this book, and I must pay a sincere tribute to the skill with which the facts are marshalled, to the clarity with which Mr. Thomas's case is presented, and to the literary talent which enables him to hold the reader's attention from the first page to the last.

Moreover, on many points Mr. Thomas compels one to revise accepted verdicts. He gives excellent reasons for believing that the accepted figure of a million dead in the war is about double the correct figure, and he is equally convincing in his critical analysis of the statistics of foreigners who fought in Spain.

To sum up, this is a book which with certain reservations may be commended to all those who are interested in the Civil War. But the objective history of that war has yet to be written.

## THE CHURCH IN GREECE

By

RAYMOND ETTELDORF

THE TRAVELLER from Western Europe or America who is visiting Athens for the first time will probably have uppermost in his mind the splendours of Greece's ancient civilisation. He may be surprised to see that Athens is a modern city; its broad streets are full of American cars; there are the inevitable advertisements for toothpaste and films, and the news-stands are as numerous and as well-patronised as the kiosks in Paris. But the Parthenon still stands on the Acropolis, majestically overlooking the city as it has done for twenty-five centuries;

a forcible reminder of the history that links ancient Greece with the modern world. The philosophy of Thomas Aquinas which became the touchstone of Christian thought, Western democracy, and Western civilisation, which rose to greatness under Christian influence, all had their beginnings here.

In Athens the Greek Byzantine Catholics, also called the Uniates, have their headquarters. They are of pure Greek blood, and can boast that they are the descendants of those who accepted Christianity from St. Paul at Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens and Corinth; and their Byzantine rite, through the Antiochene, is very ancient. Yet they are given scant recognition in Greece, and are little known outside the country. They are a mere handful, numbering 2,120, with one Bishop and twelve priests in a population of eight million. Their activity is very limited; they are reluctantly tolerated and regarded with suspicion by most Orthodox ecclesiastical and lay readers, and opposed by some with fanatical hatred.

There is no question about the apostolic origin of Christianity in Greece. The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, the Philippians and the Corinthians are constant reminders of this historical fact. The first Christian community in Europe was established by St. Paul at Philippi in Macedonia, and it was in Athens that the Apostle delivered his classical address on "The Unknown God." There is a tradition that St. Andrew, St. Thomas and St. Matthew also evangelised the Greeks, but there is no accepted historical proof of this. At any rate, after the preaching of St. Paul and his disciples, the faith spread rapidly in Greece. The names of the Bishops of various Greek cities were recorded from the time of the early Roman persecution of Christianity; Publius, Bishop of Athens, was put to death for the faith during the persecution of Hadrian; and his successor, Quadratus, was noted as an apologist.

The Greek people were widely dispersed in the Mediterranean countries at the time of the early diffusion of Christianity. Greek was used as the language of the Church not only in the East, where it was predominant, but also, up to A.D. 250, in the West. For example, the Epistles of St. Clement of Herma, the works of St. Hippolytus, who was a priest in Rome, and the writings of St. Irenaeus, were in Greek and the first churches in Southern France grew up under Greek influence.

The Greek Church was originally linked with Western Christendom, and its lot was cast with the East largely because of the immense political influence of Constantinople. When in the fourth century the division of the Roman Empire by Diocletian became the basis for the organisation of ecclesiastical zones, the Roman patriarchate included the prefectures of Gaul, Italy and Illyricum, and the emperors agreed to divide the territory into two sections, Gratian taking Western Illyricum and Theodosius Eastern Illyricum, which included most of Modern Greece.

Thus Eastern Illyricum came under the Byzantine Empire, and the Patriarch of Constantinople claimed it for his jurisdiction. From that time Greece has remained ecclesiastically in the camp of the East, and for fifteen centuries the course of the Church in Greece has been determined by the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Greek Byzantine Catholics are the spiritual descendants of those who remained loyal to the Pope at the time of the Eastern schism, or who later returned to the Church of Rome.

The year 1054 has been given by many historians as the date of the schism, but in fact no precise date can be given. Runciman<sup>1</sup> points out that in the twelfth century there were exchanges of diplomatic missions between the Popes and the Byzantine emperors in the patriarchate of Constantinople; officially sponsored debates were held in which Byzantine and Western theologians participated; and in 1129 Peter the Venerable, Abbot of the Monastery of Cluny, wrote a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople in terms of admiration and homage that the great Abbot would not have expressed towards a schismatic prelate.

Though no specific date can be given for the schism as a whole, the break had certainly been made in the patriarchate of Constantinople in 1206, when the Greeks openly rejected the Patriarch appointed by the Pope. Here and there pockets of Christians remained who were loyal to the Pope. It is recorded, for example, that Joseph, a Catholic Bishop of the Byzantine rite, died because he stayed with his people at the conquest of Metone. On the island of Strofadi as late as the seventeenth century, there was a monastery of Byzantine rite monks who professed loyalty to the Pope. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a number of Greek bishops, priests and monks submitted individually to the

<sup>1</sup> *The Eastern Schism*, Oxford University Press.

See of Peter. There is no doubt about the continuity of Byzantine rite Catholics after the schism, but it is difficult to trace it because the people were scattered and without a hierarchy. To aid Greek Catholics deprived of schools after the fall of Byzantium, Pope Gregory XIII established the Greek College in Rome. In 1632 it became a strictly religious institution, and is today a seminary for Greek students.

The Turkish conquerors of Byzantium followed the *millet* system; that is, they granted autonomous civil government to religious bodies. At this time Greek Catholics had no standing, for they were included among the separated Christians, and hence were civilly subject to the schismatic patriarch. In 1839, after persecuting Armenian Catholics, Sultan Mahmud II was constrained to grant civil emancipation to all Catholic non-Latin subjects in the Ottoman Empire. This finally made it possible to establish a civilly recognised community of Greek Catholics of the Byzantine rite.

A Latin priest of Syra, John Hyacinthe Marengo, conceived the idea of a religious congregation of both rites dedicated solely to the return of the Greeks to unity. In 1856 he began to carry out his plan, running a periodical in which he propounded his ideas. He made a number of converts, among whom were two dissident Greek Bishops. Eventually he had to abandon the project, partly because of opposition from the government, partly for financial reasons; but the little community he had founded continued to grow. Its members spread to other countries, and in Constantinople a minor seminary was established. The resurgence of the Byzantine rite Catholics was slow but definite. In 1895 Leo XIII charged the Augustinians of the Assumption with the task of conducting a larger seminary at Constantinople. Two parishes were set up in the European section of Constantinople, and in 1897 the Augustinians started a periodical, *Echos d'Orient*.

A small movement towards Catholicism had developed in the village of Malgara in 1882. In the following year a young priest, Isaiah Papadopoulos, was sent there, and in spite of seemingly insurmountable difficulties, he succeeded in forming a community of Byzantine Catholics with civil recognition by the local authorities. In 1907 Archbishop Giovanni Tacci, the Apostolic Delegate in Constantinople, appointed Fr. Papadopoulos his Vicar General for the Byzantine rite Catholics. In 1911 Pope

Pius X decreed the establishment of an Ordinariate for the Byzantine rite Catholics, consisting of the territory of the Apostolic Delegation at Constantinople, and Fr. Papadopoulos was consecrated its first Bishop. In 1917 he was appointed the first assessor of the newly created Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church and in 1920 Bishop George Calavassey, a native of Greece and an Alumnus of the Greek College in Rome, became the new Bishop.

After World War I many of the Greeks in Turkey were compelled to leave the country. They fled to Greece, and some of the Catholic refugees settled in Athens and near Salonika, Bishop Calavassey also went to Greece and brought with him to Athens the seminary, the preparatory school for the Greek College in Rome and the Congregation of the Sisters of Pammacaristos, which he had recently founded.

Thus, after many centuries of living under foreign rule, Greek Catholics of the Byzantine rite returned to their native land. They were fortunate to have as their leader a man like Bishop Calavassey, who combined the qualities of fearlessness and tact, determination and patience, forthrightness and humility. It would be an understatement to say that he did not have an easy course to chart; the opposition of certain Orthodox elements was bitter, relentless and often violent. He could see that, because of the attitude of Orthodox leaders, it would not be prudent to preach or even discuss the possibility of the reunion of the Orthodox Church with Rome. He considered that the best way to break down the barriers of ill-will and misunderstanding was through works of charity.

In 1945 he established the Pammacaristos hospital in Athens, putting it under the direction of the Pammacaristos Sisters. To-day it is recognised as one of the finest and best equipped hospitals in Greece. The doctors, most of the nurses, and, of course, most of the patients are Orthodox. The Pammacaristos Sisters also run in Athens hostels for young women workers and students. They provide inexpensive board and lodging for girls who come to Athens from other parts of Greece to work or study; most of these, too, are Orthodox. On Akarion Street in Athens, where the Greek Catholic Bishop and his priests have their residence, there is a hostel for 120 young men studying at the University of Athens; they are all Orthodox. Bishop Cala-



vassey established an orphanage and school for Greek refugee children at Nea Macri, not far from the scene of the battle of Marathon. It is run by the Pammacaristos Sisters, and the school takes 155 girls, most of whom are Orthodox. In comparison with developments in other dioceses in other parts of the world, these institutions may appear insignificant; but they assume major importance when they are seen as the work of a diocese which came into existence only in 1922, and as institutions established in an atmosphere of suspicion and opposition.

Bishop Calavassey's work did not stop short at these charities. It would take too long to enumerate here all the benefits he obtained during World War II, not only for his own people but for the Greek nation as a whole. After hostilities had started, he sought the mediation of Pope Pius XII that Athens might escape bombardment. He offered to help in working to alleviate the sufferings of the people during the War. In the time of famine he obtained from Australia, through England, large supplies of food-stuffs for people in all parts of Greece. In November 1941 he inaugurated the Centre of Divine Providence where prepared food was served to all who asked for it; and of course, most of the people who received this assistance were Orthodox.

During the time of the abortive Communist revolution in Greece, Bishop Calavassey increased the number of these centres, and he stressed the need for material help for young people. His paternal solicitude for the 28,000 children separated from their families by the Communist revolutionary forces led him to seek the intervention of the governments of other countries, although this had to be done indirectly. It did not matter that most of the children were Orthodox, and strictly speaking, not of his flock. He protested because he saw that an enormous injustice was being enacted against them and their families, and his protests were effective. Again, when a devastating earthquake struck Greece in 1953, he did everything he could to relieve the victims of the disaster.

People of the Orthodox religion above all benefited from his social and charitable enterprises, from his permanent institutions and from organisations set up in times of crisis and disaster; yet Bishop Calavassey met with violent opposition from influential Orthodox quarters. Twenty-four times he was summoned to court to answer charges brought against him by Orthodox

adversaries, and each time he cleared himself of their charges. The integrity he demonstrated in his defence, and his strong dedicated personality moved not only the judges, but even his adversaries to admire him. But he still met with implacable opposition on certain points.

For many years Bishop Calavassey had planned to build a Cathedral. He needed the permission of the Greek government, and though he asked for it persistently the permission was delayed, through a combination of bureaucratic red tape and Orthodox opposition. Even his works of charity were attacked and condemned as mere proselytising.

In 1930, after receiving repeated protests from Orthodox quarters, the Ministry of Cults and Instruction forbade Bishop Calavassey and his priests to wear Byzantine clerical dress, on the grounds that their appearance in public in this dress constituted propaganda. The Bishop could have argued that he was simply following the Byzantine tradition of his forebears, who had never separated from Rome; but he accepted the ban, and henceforth he and his priests appeared in public dressed as priests of the Latin rite.

There are historical grounds for expecting greater opposition towards Catholics of the Latin rite than towards Byzantine Catholics. The Latin Church was imposed on the Greeks in the eleventh century in the wake of invading Frankish armies; this aroused bitter objection to Latinisation, and it has remained a traditional point of complaint. In 1209 Pope Innocent III established the Latin rite Archbishopric of Athens with eleven suffragan sees. After the Venetian conquests, beginning in 1386, other Latin rite bishoprics were set up in the Ionian, Peloponnesian, and Cyclades islands, and in Crete. The Venetian-Turkish war, and mixed marriages, greatly reduced the number of Latin rite Catholics. To-day there are only 39,000 in Greece, with two Archbishops, one Bishop (seven sees are officially listed but are vacant), 85 priests, 126 nuns and 51 brothers. Like the Catholic Armenians, who number about 600, the Latin rite Catholics in Greece are tolerated as a foreign element.

Whatever remaining prejudices the Orthodox may have against Catholics of the Latin rite, the fiercest opposition, it appears, is directed at Catholics of the Byzantine rite. In 1959 when Archbishop Marion Macrionitis of the Latin rite see of

Athens died, the Orthodox did not actively oppose the appointment of his successor Archbishop Benedict Printesis. After the death of Bishop Calavassey in 1957, however, the Orthodox organised opposition to block the appointment of his successor. The purpose of this move was clearly to put an end to the Byzantine Catholic bishopric in Athens.

A group of professors of theology at the University of Athens addressed a letter to Pope Pius XII asking him not to appoint a successor to Bishop Calavassey. This letter is signed by the rector, Gerasimo Konidaris, and seven professors of theology. These men are all lay theologians, so their letter is hardly an official document of the Greek Orthodox Church. Yet since they hold highly responsible positions in the University it is difficult to understand how the letter could have been written and published in the press without the knowledge, and at least tacit approval, of high ecclesiastical authorities.

The letter appears to be self-contradictory, for it leaps from an expression of a sincere desire for union with Rome, to bitter opposition of those who are united; from a proud boast of ancient Catholic origins to a denunciation of those who have completely returned to them. One explanation of this inconsistency may be that the Orthodox idea of unity is different from the Catholic, and that they hope not for organic unity but for a kind of confederation of Churches. Yet if this were the case it would not be necessary for them to suggest that theologians "prepare the ground by means of long and sincere endeavours." The signatories to this letter do not in fact give any reason for their attitude towards the Greek Byzantine Catholics. According to the latest statistics there are 7,914,555 Orthodox Christians in Greece, ninety-nine per cent of the total population. It seems strange that they should regard the tiny Catholic minority with such fear and suspicion.

There is a very simple explanation for the Orthodox opposition to the Greek Catholics. At first glance it may seem too simple: it is the continuing force of the schism. In almost all things, save submission to the Pope, the Byzantine Catholics are like the Orthodox.<sup>1</sup> But the Orthodox are unable to accept the fact that

<sup>1</sup> There are more differences between the Greek Orthodox and Catholics than is generally realised. For example, their official approval of divorce and remarriage, their emphasis on the Epiklesis in the Mass and their acceptance of "questionable" individuals as saints.

it is possible to be a Greek Christian, and at the same time be subject to the Pope. It was to save the Orthodox people from being exposed to this idea that the state law was passed prohibiting Catholic priests from appearing in public wearing Byzantine clerical dress. In approaching the question of uniting separated Christians with Rome, we must take into account the nature of the problem as it manifests itself in each individual group. The refusal of the Greek Orthodox to submit to the Pope has become part of their history; their attitude to religion is an integral part of their national mentality, and it will take years of patient work, using all the means at our disposal, to overcome this prejudice and make it possible for them to rejoin the body from which they cut themselves off so many centuries ago.

## NO VICTORIOUS DEATH

By

C. C. MARTINDALE

**T**O SPEND FIVE YEARS in an occupied country, and to read or listen to (if you get the chance of doing either) nothing but stories of destruction leads to no easy optimism. Nor was the first sight of London encouraging, though St. Paul's was still standing despite a photo I had seen showing it in flames (luckily I had recognized it as a réchauffé of a First War photo, and a fake, of course, at that). But it is a duty to be as optimist as one can, and to draw on the virtue of Hope, the least spoken of the Great Three.

Ever since 1926, if not earlier, we had been privileged to watch the work done by the *Association of Perpetual Adoration and Work for Poor Churches and Foreign Missions*, of which the H.Q. in this island was in Horseferry Road, Westminster, and we have decided to mention this first, as being, not precisely the most spiritual of the undertakings we had hopes for, since all Catholic Work must needs in its ultimate aim be spiritual, but

a work done directly for the Altar. So long ago as 1843 a Belgian lady, Mlle Anna de Méus, appalled by the destitution of many a church in her land, began a work which was to develop into that Archconfraternity which has ensured her fine, patrician, strong yet sympathetic features being known in every continent. Clearly we do not propose to trace here the development of the association, even in England; enough to say that it was established in various centres but it was felt at once that it must have an H.Q. in the metropolis and by 1890 it bought a large plot of land in Balham; but even this was rather inaccessible and so expensive that to live in it meant to die in it, and a move was made to a tiny flat in Westminster by nuns so poor as to be unable to warm their rooms lest they should lack light for the sewing of vestments meant to be given *gratis* to the many very poor churches that needed them. But in 1927 a generous benefactress bought a large Wesleyan chapel standing in about an acre on the left of Horseferry Road and gave it to the Archdiocese. But who could make use of this? Only some religious society and in fact the English branch of the Association did buy it for some £20,000 which were borrowed. Till this sum, with its huge interest, was paid off, how was it possible to think of re-conditioning the two wretched cottages in which the nuns lived and the basement—below Thames level—in which they worked and where committee meetings and so forth were held? Once the river rose to the very top of the stairs leading down to that basement; but in any case, needles always rusted, materials rotted, relays of courageous cats tried to keep mice down but could not prevent human aches and pains. Well, by the heroic efforts of the nuns and their friends this debt was paid off not long before the outbreak of War II and plans, and grandiose plans, were already drawn up for a new convent with annexes and funds began to be collected. But not only the war came, and a bomb demolished the church—a Sister just rescued the Blessed Sacrament before the great east window crashed down on where she had stood—but civic plans were elaborated for the rebuilding of the entire street: what land could the Sisters count on? Anyway, how disheartening to have to begin all over again! But despite ten years of negotiations with the civic authorities, the irrepressible Sisters now find themselves with every permission granted, the respectable houses in West Kensington to which



they had flitted (16 Holland Villas Road, W.14) let to another Community, and the joy of seeing the Horseferry Road ruins cleared and the walls of a new home there beginning to rise.

Far, then, from being dead, the Institute prays to become so vigorous as to tell every Bishop that so far as the equipping of any desperately poor, or new, church goes, he can be at ease: it can be done *gratis*, from cassock and cotta up to missal and monstrance. But can London ever achieve all this? Obviously not! But by keeping in touch with all local centres, it can obtain, and distribute information about work done and to be done and co-ordinate it. In many districts there is no local centre but exceptionally grave need for help—this may be true of parts of North Wales or South West England; and of course the foreign missions can do nothing to help themselves. Thus, God willing, the activity of the Association, which envelops all its work in Perpetual Adoration, will go ever further in enabling Mass to be offered with dignity and devotion.

Towards the end of the last century, humanitarianism often expressed itself in the establishment of Settlements. Wealthy folks "went down" to the East End and *Punch* mocked mildly at the nobility "gone slumming." But to live there meant real heroism. In 1893 Cardinal Vaughan asked the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle to found the "Catholic Union Settlement" on Tower Hill where she and a few others lived and visited the bug-infested hovels of Whitechapel, carrying gifts, and helping Catholics to practise their Faith. No doubt clubs and guilds were created, but one feels that works of charity done *de haut en bas* predominated, nor did people then resent this. In 1913 the Duchess died and the Settlement was left penniless. But an ex-pupil of the Holy Child school at Mayfield, Magdalen Walker, who had lived in the Settlement since 1904, appealed to all the Holy Child schools which took over the management of the Settlement, with Magdalen Walker the first Resident Superintendent. In 1919 Cardinal Bourne asked for the transfer of the Settlement to Poplar.

The poor Settlement had to fit itself into two narrow houses (130 High Street, Poplar, E.14). Behind these was a "garden" containing a vine and a fig-tree, no less, but barren. Then came the club-room (which afterwards was found to have no foundations; it rested upon earth through which ran an open drain; the

walls began to bulge and iron girders threatened to fall in); then came Cut-throat Lane by which the room was entered by members; then a stretch of railway and finally the river and the East India Docks. We are not of course attempting to outline the activities of the Settlement during these earlier days. Enough to say that in 1927 Mrs. Spencer Bull was appointed Warden, and it was almost at once that we were privileged to make her, and the Settlement's, acquaintance, and what was at once noticeable was the close personal influence exerted by the Settlement staff not only on those who came to the Club but in their homes. It was a spirit of trust and genuine affection. May such personal contacts never cease: no perfection of organisation can replace them. The club-rooms were, then, demolished and two very simple ones constructed with a flat roof wired-in so that cricket balls and footballs could be hit or kicked about on it—indeed, the Catholic members of the Australian Test Team came and each bowled the ball at boys up there, and were bowled at and one was bowled *out*; and the New Zealand All Blacks came too and it had to be ordered that only initials should be scrawled on the scraps of paper offered. Even so police protection had to enable the men to extricate themselves from the ecstatic throngs filling the streets. There came too a massive prize-fighter from the U.S.A. who preached (yes!) a discourse on a spiritual subject when boys wanted to admire his muscles. Certainly there was a strong element of the spiritual in the life of that club—confessions were heard on that roof; problems discussed privately—and how profound are often those produced by youths inarticulate in any official situation; and also, so much gaiety, children's parties, old people's parties. But we mention here only the presentation of the Cross *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* to the Warden in 1936 after her ten years' work in Poplar; and there was the happy incident of the collection by Pius XI of 45 gold sovereigns in the Vatican (he had wanted to find fifty) as his contribution to the building of the new Club.<sup>1</sup> On the 7 August 1944, a flying bomb reduced all this to dust.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot help boasting of the big St. George banner: it had no fussy embroideries to distract from its pure colours—deep red, orange, some grand blue, and the silver Saint standing like Donatello's statue firmly in the midst. Narrow black framing separated and intensified the colours. The first two comments on the Saint were: "'E ain't half got a neck on him!'", and "'Coo, 'e'd 'ave made a fine goalie!'" Just what I'd hoped.

During the War, the Settlement did heroic work for evacuees, refugees, British and American troops in Abingdon, near Oxford; we cannot touch on this. Return to devastated Poplar. Could these dry bones live? The nature of Poplar society had, like that of all societies, changed much after the First War. After the Second, it was completely different. Reproduction was impossible as well as undesirable. The very name "Settlement" might be thought unsuitable. True, the new Settlement became the base from which ladies visited homes, medical clinics and schools, and worked increasingly on general local Committees, and diffused that personal influence to which we alluded; and it incorporated a "St. George's Club" which is already an extension of the old club such as to be almost a new creation, and it looks forward to a still greater expansion, for the approval of the Ministry of Education and the L.C.C. is obtained.

Now the Club, while welcoming non-Catholics, is itself a Catholic enterprise, and we have always been convinced that, as such, it must provide for instruction. Bishop Cashman, in a courageously probing sermon at Glastonbury, recently asked if we were better equipped than our sixteenth-century ancestors to resist the pressures on our Faith. And if we are not, the first reason may well be that we do not know that Faith, and what the catechism teaches our ears has not been assimilated by our minds. Maybe the smaller subsidiary rooms to the main hall, where handicrafts may be learnt and music that *is* music heard, can serve also for such instruction. Anyway, how much more is there here than mere survival and improvement!

During the First War it became clear that with peace there would be a rush to the Universities. Therefore Catholic societies must be strengthened, revived or created to welcome Catholic arrivals. This would succeed the better if the Societies knew one another, the stronger encouraging the weaker. So annual reunions were inaugurated and at last a Federation was created. But how anaemic would our British Catholic culture have remained had it not been nourished by the mental riches that the Continent could supply. This was, in fact, foreseen from the outset; and what countries recently at war might not accomplish the intelligent and impartial enterprise of "neutral" countries, like Holland and Switzerland, could. A Confederation was therefore formed and was called *Pax Romana*. This had a somewhat chequered career,

including some very successful international reunions; but to one who felt that Europe itself had been hopelessly fragmented by War II, it could but seem even more impossible that an intellectual association like *Pax Romana* could subsist. Yet at what period in history was a united Catholic *Mind* more necessary? Well, we find not only that by now the Newman Association will have held its annual general meeting in London, but that *Pax Romana* will have celebrated the fortieth year of its work in Fribourg (Switzerland) from 24 to 31 July. Its theme will be "The Christian Intellectual in the Modern World." It will contain special meetings for Scientists, Pharmacists, Teaching professions, Technologists, Artists, Lawyers: there will be a Seminar, four days of discussion on "The Student as Pioneer for a Better World," there are to be conferences on the Responsibility of the Christian Intellectual in the World today by Cardinal Konig (Austria), Professor Halecki (Poland and U.S.A.). And there is to be an Exhibition, "Art at the Service of the Liturgy." Is there something complacent, almost snobbish, in this importance attached to the intellect? We cannot admit it, while acknowledging the risk. Would that a "liberal education" were more prevalent amongst us, and that it seemed likely to have its chance in the future! Try to talk to the youth of the Club just mentioned, and before long you will find every atom of your knowledge drawn upon, and your intellectual faculties at strain.

We mention only one fact showing that in yet another part of our national Catholic life we are not dormant—the Sea Apostolate. We had long been full of admiration for Atlantic House in Liverpool and baffled by the non-existence of anything similar in London. Now a magnificent "Anchor House" is being established (office and chaplaincy, 2 Mary Street, Canning Town, London E.16); and if you allege the vast improvements constantly being made in the conditions of seamen, well, life in smaller ships, trawlers, fishing fleets, is still very rough, and after all these men are for long parts of their life without home, parish or diocese, and the problems this supplies are huge, for what meanwhile is forming or distorting their minds? Here, too, then, the problem never reaches an end. So, begin again!

We have, then, chosen four instances of Catholic work which one might have feared would have been crippled, if not killed by the late War. We found that there had been no final victory

for Death, but that in these subordinate yet amazing duels it had remained with Life. And we chose these particular four, partly because we had watched them for a long time (in the last instance, the Apostleship of the Sea in general), and because they aim each in its way at reaching, and may be rescuing, the *minds* of those whom they serve. Thus the Work for Poor Churches wraps up all it makes in Perpetual Adoration which transforms the work done from within. How different is a chasuble made with love and prayer, from one bought, machine-made and mass-produced, in a "church furnishing" establishment! But while it is as difficult as necessary to reach the mind at all, we find that when reached, it is already different from what it was yesterday; so it will always be, war or no war, an affair of beginning again. *Cras ingens iterabimus aequor.*

## A STRATFORD SCHOOLMASTER

JOHN COTTAM was master of the Grammar School at Stratford-on-Avon from 1579-82 when William Shakespeare was from 15-18 years of age, and the Rev. E. I. Fripp<sup>1</sup> says that John was an elder brother of the young priest, Thomas Cottam, who was accused of high treason, arraigned at Westminster Hall with Edmund Campion and others on 16 November, 1581, found guilty, and executed with all the prevailing barbarity at Tyburn on 30 May, 1582.

Their parents were Laurence Cottam of Dilworth, Lancs., and his wife Ann *née* Brewer, and at an inquisition held after his death in 1619 it was declared that "Laurence Cottam was seized of a messuage and sixteen acres of meadow and pasture in Dilworth, held of Sir Richard Houghton in free and common socage."

The Houghtons, as the name is usually written in charters, were great landowners in Lancashire, and Alexander Houghton of Lea became head of the family in 1569 when his brother the heir relinquished his patrimony, became an exile for his faith, and entered the service of Philip of Spain.

Alexander married twice, late in life, but had no children by either wife, and on 20 July 1580 he transferred by deed the whole of his estate, with the exception of his personal effects and some property in Withnell township with an annual rental of £16 13s 4d to a half-brother, Thomas Houghton of Brinscall, Lancs., the father of the first Protestant in the family, the Sir Richard Houghton of the Laurence Cottam inquisition.

<sup>1</sup> E. I. Fripp, *Shakespeare, Man and Artist*, Vol. I, p. 92.



Alexander Houghton's will<sup>1</sup> is dated 3 August 1581, and was proved a month later, and in it he names thirty of his servants and tenants. To eleven of these, which included a William Shakshafte and a Foke Gyllome, he leaves annuities of varying amounts, the total annual sum involved being exactly £16 13s 4d.

He expresses his wish that his half-brother should have all his musical instruments and players' clothes if he intends to keep players, and if he does not, then these articles were to become the property of Sir Thomas Hesketh of Rufford Hall, ten miles south of Lea, and he asks this gentleman to be friendly to William Shakshafte and Foke Gyllome now dwelling with him, and either to employ them himself or to help them to find another good master. There was a Shakshafte family in the neighbourhood of Preston, Lancs., and an Agnes, a Henry, a John and a Thomas of that name are referred to in the Calendar of Pleadings of the Duchy, and this fact may have caused the scrivener responsible for drafting the will to write the name of William, who was almost certainly the poet William Shakespeare,<sup>2</sup> in this way.

No dependence can be placed upon Tudor spelling, the same man's name is often variously written in a single document. Seventy-three different contemporary spellings of the surname "Raleigh" have been compiled, and Sir Walter himself used several. The poet's grandfather appears in the Snitterfield Court Rolls of 1542 as "Richard Shakeschafte," and earlier as "Shakstaff."

The testator gives his executors instructions that as each of the eleven annuitants dies his share was to be equally divided amongst the remainder, presumably of the whole thirty, so that the ultimate survivor receives the whole annual sum of £16 13s 4d.

Amongst the thirty is a "John Cotham" who was probably the Stratford schoolmaster; the surname of his brother is written in the same way in the Tower prisoner list of 1581. "Thomas Cotham, Preste."<sup>3</sup> John Cottam married Catherine Dove of Brentwood, Essex, and they had one child, a daughter Priscilla, and the names of John Cottam, his wife and daughter Priscilla frequently appear in the Recusant Rolls. Priscilla married Thomas Walton of Walton-le-Dale, Lancs., and two of their sons, James and John, became priests. James Walton was ordained at the English College, Rome, on 24 October 1633, and soon after became a member of the English mission, using the alias "Thomas Cottam."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Houghton's Will, Chetham Soc. Pubn. Vol. 51, pp. 237-41.

<sup>2</sup> *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 195, pp. 205-6. Vol. 197, pp. 156-7 and pp. 387-9.

<sup>3</sup> Catholic Record Society, Vol. 2, p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> Cottam and Walton Families—Tom C. Smith, *A History of Longridge*, pp. 140-4.

During John Cottam's stay at Stratford two visits were made there by the Earl of Derby's Lancashire players and gratuities paid to them by the Council are entered in the minutes in February 1580 and January 1581, and it was on one of these occasions that the young Shakespeare, possibly with the advice or assistance of the schoolmaster, joined them and travelled with them to Lancashire, and it was in the Catholic households of the Houghtons and the Heskeths and later with the player troupe of another Catholic, Ferdinando Stanley, that the young poet acquired the rudiments of his trade.

The old story, based entirely upon Stratford gossip, that Shakespeare left the tradesman home at Stratford, walked to London, held horses' heads outside the theatre, and suddenly walked in and wrote *Love's Labour Lost*, his first published and one of his earliest plays, which shows an intimate knowledge of the ways of noblemen and gentlefolk, is incredible.

In connection with the above remarks, it may be interesting to recall what Emerson says when comparing the historical characters of Scott and Shakespeare.

Of the former he says, "His Lords brave each other in smart epigrammatic speeches, but the dialogue is in costume and does not please on a second reading. In Shakespeare alone the speakers do not strut and bridle, the dialogue is easily great, and he adds to so many titles that of being the best bred man in England and Christendom."

H. A. SHIELD

## REVIEWS

### CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

*The Idea of Punishment*, by Lord Longford (Geoffrey Chapman 10s 6d).

THE DAY that the reviewer opened *The Idea of Punishment* saw the publication by Moscow of the new decrees imposing more severe penalties on Russian civil and political malefactors, even the death penalty for many of them. In Czarist Russia death came only to those who were found guilty of high treason or of the attempted assassination of a member of the Imperial family. If we had no other evidence here would be sufficient to indicate that socialism and humanitarianism do not go hand in hand. Nor is it long since we heard the Secretary General of the Supreme Soviet declare above the arguments of disputants that Communism had been achieved within the boundaries of Russia. We might have expected the withering away

of crime with the withering away of the State. Instead, as the new decree explicitly declares, the commission of crime is on the up and up. The heavy penalties now imposed are aimed at deterring the potential criminal by brutal threats. They are indeed a harking back to eighteenth-century criminal law. Then it was private property that had to be safeguarded at the price of a man's head, now it is the property of the state.

The shock that the Russian decree has given the Western world serves to highlight its own discussion on the treatment of law-breakers. For we also face an increase in crime and are perplexed as to how to deal with it. But fortunately, as Lord Longford stresses, the Christian tradition of mercy, though obscured in England at least, for a period of two or three centuries, still persists. In 1939 there were 11,000 men and women in our prisons and Borstals; in 1950, 20,000; in 1960, 27,000. Yet the question that penologists and sociologists constantly ask themselves is not only: how can the rot be stopped; but further, how can the condemned be reformed and integrated into society as normal citizens on their release. High Court judges also and magistrates on the Bench often temper justice with mercy and weightily consider how the twisted characters before them may be made straight.

In an *obiter dictum*, Lord Longford reaffirms his disapproval of capital punishment on "ethical grounds." He has dealt with the subject at length elsewhere. But he does here discuss, although rather sketchily, the use of corporal punishment. Quite rightly he distinguishes between the corporal punishment inflicted by its parents and teachers on the erring child. When given in moderation, it is motivated by a very personal love. It might be added that it is or ought to be swift and hence clearly connected in the child's mind with the action it has done and which it has been told not to do. The physical evil of the smack then becomes linked with the "moral" evil of the action. Fear motivates the initial abiding by the law and educates the mind until the age when the child can reason to the justice of the law. There is little parallel here with the corporal punishment that can be inflicted by the courts, even when imposed on youth. The link between the physical and moral evil is not so obvious to the more mature mind, which has presumably committed the crime with deliberation. The lapse of time between the commission of the act and the receiving of the corporal punishment is inevitably lengthy. On both scores the victim is inclined to view such punishment as purely vindictive.

Lord Longford devotes much of his small volume to the vexed question of retribution. In his final chapters he analyses very lucidly the Christian teaching on retribution for sin and the meaning of the Redemption. But he makes quite clear that sin and crime are not identical and that it is God alone that can exact retribution for sin.

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God alone knows the balance between the two; God alone knows the just guilt of each individual, the spirit of his repentance and the firmness of his will. God's justice is also tremendously tempered by His mercy. Man cannot hope to enter into the mind of God, but that does not mean that he cannot exact retribution of the criminal. The law-breaker has done damage to society and society may demand some offering in compensation. Yet in so far as deterrence and reform (of the criminal) must remain the primary objectives in punishment as imposed by the state's courts, the retributive factor can only be taken into consideration as the measure of the penalty. The punishment must in some way fit the crime.

But one is led to wonder if, so far as the condemned criminal is concerned, there can be any hope of his reform unless he appreciates, at least during the course of his time in gaol, that he is making retribution. If he is to be integrated into society, he must come to see that he *deserves* his detention. At the same time, that detention must be irksome to him, that is he must feel it as a punishment. These points are well worth making since so many prisoners who are "inside" for comparatively petty crimes merely consider that they have been unlucky in being caught and that they will have better luck next time. Nor do they find prison life any great penalty. Many of them view it as a period of rest when they get three square meals a day, a moderate amount of exercise, a minimum of rather aimless work, long periods of conversation lolling on their bunks when they are three in a cell, and plenty of sleep. Even if they have any affection for their wives and children and miss their company (a thing that is doubtful of many) they know that National Assistance provides.

What therefore is needed in the prisoner is a moral sense. Where that is lacking, the greater part of the attempts to reform the prisoner is bound to fail. And the majority of our penologists and sociologists are unable to instil it, since although they may possess it in practice themselves, they have no religious (that is logical) foundation for that sense. They can give no fundamental reason why the prisoner should be good.

Lord Longford is an outstanding exception in this unfortunate majority. Hence, although at first sight it seems sadly out of place, his final chapter entitled "Punishment and Christian Theology" gives meaning to all that has gone before. For those who seek, it also gives the key to the problem of finding a remedy for the sickness of the criminal. And surely it alone offers the final deterrent and a hope of a decrease in the appalling figures of crime in the affluent societies of the West. One says the "West" since the West still harbours a hope. For Russia and her satellites, one can but shed a tear.

C. M. KEANE

## THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA

*The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768*, by H. de la Costa, S.J. (Harvard University Press: London, Oxford University Press 100s).

*Galileo in China*, by Pasquale M. D'Elia, S.J. (Harvard University Press: London, Oxford University Press 32s).

ALMOST TWO CENTURIES of steady missionary progress: it is not an easy subject to compress into a readable book, but Fr. de la Costa triumphantly succeeds by virtue of his style. Humane, witty, trenchant, tolerant of foibles and delighting in good hard Anglo-Saxon words, it seems to have been modelled on that of Fr. James Brodrick. Even an eighteenth-century college curriculum becomes diverting!

What surprised me most in this period of mission history was the importance of law to the colonial Spaniards. They rigorously thought out the legal basis of colonialism in a way unknown to nineteenth-century Empire-builders. For instance, the Synod of Manila (1581-86) laid down that while the Spaniards came to the Philippines with a purely spiritual commission, they were nevertheless justified in subjecting the inhabitants to their temporal rule for the sake of achieving the spiritual end which would otherwise be unattainable.

Out of this conclusion grew a fantastic plan to send an armed expedition from the Philippines to China with the object of compelling the Chinese government to permit the entry of missionaries into China, and of providing the missionaries with an armed escort to ensure their safety while preaching Christianity to the Chinese. If the Chinese government resisted, war was to be declared and Spanish sovereignty imposed on the conquered territory! One Alonso Sánchez even travelled to Spain to get this plan carried out, but he died shortly after his arrival, in 1593. And by then Matteo Ricci had developed another, better way of evangelising China in safety.

This respect for legal rights is evident throughout the Philippine mission's history. For instance, "the practice of missionaries in the case of gold idols was to have them melted down and the gold returned to their owners." A delightful and most revealing detail. And in 1768 when the Most Catholic King saw fit to expel the Jesuits from his dominions, the missionaries were prepared to obey without protest. The King's decree was law.

As for the Filipinos, they emerge as an attractive, warm-hearted people. The Tagalogs (the people around Manila) believed in survival after death and the propitiation by sacrifice of formidable spirits, behind whom lay their shadowy beneficent God: Bat-hala the Fashioner. The brave and wise and beautiful might attain blessedness after death, crossing a chasm by means of a single plank. No woman



might hope to cross unless she had someone who loved her well in life to help her.

Law and primitive religion: these are only two of Fr. de la Costa's varied themes, which include sea warfare, diplomacy, trade relations, economics, mission organisation, administration and finance. The carefully documented material is most skilfully arranged as a continuous narrative: at once a history of the Philippines and of a highly successful mission. It is good news indeed that the author is now writing a concluding volume.

Science and philosophy played little part in the Philippine mission, but in China they were crucial. In 1947 Fr. D'Elia, the great Italian Sinologue, published in *Analecta Gregoriana* an account of how Galileo's discoveries were made known in China. This important piece of research, long admired by students of Chinese history, has now been translated with several additions whereby the American book supersedes the Italian original. Paradox follows on paradox in this extraordinary story. Just when Galileo's trial was on the point of beginning, his telescope was introduced by Jesuit missionaries as far as Korea. Soon a telescope reached Nagasaki, where it was placed on a hill—not to observe the stars, but to spy from a distance the coming of foreigners! In China, too, the new invention—shades of nuclear fission—was turned to sinister ends. In 1634 a memorial to the Emperor from the director of the Astronomical Bureau noted that the telescope "is very useful for watching the enemy in cannon's range."

Fr. D'Elia's most important addition is a section entitled "Did the Jesuits Hide the Heliocentric System from the Chinese?" He points out that the Italian, James Rho, openly discussed Galileo's theory in a Chinese book dated 1637, while two Polish Jesuits, Michael Boym and Nicholas Smogolenski, taught and strongly recommended their compatriot's theory in 1645-46. However, the Jesuits' chief task was the strictly practical one of correcting the calendar, which could be done sufficiently exactly on the basis of Ptolemaic theory. Other conclusive evidence shows the late Professor Duyvendak's charge of deliberate obscurantism to be groundless.

As an appendix, Fr. D'Elia publishes a translation of the first European document on the Chinese calendar (1612), by Ricci's colleague, Sebastian De Ursis. This explains why the calendar mattered so much to the Chinese and why, therefore, Galileo's work so greatly interested the missionaries.

It remains to be said that both Fr. D'Elia's book and Fr. de la Costa's are models of exact scholarship, illuminated by wise and liberal judgment.

VINCENT CRONIN

## FOUNTAIN OF THE WORD

*The Word, Church and Sacraments in Protestantism and Catholicism*, by Louis Bouyer, Cong. Orat. (Geoffrey Chapman 10s 6d).

*Principles of Sacramental Theology*, by Bernard Leeming, S.J. New Edition (Longmans 42s).

*The Sacraments*, by Cecily Hastings (Sheed and Ward 8s 6d).

**S**ACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY is on the move. Its momentum is derived in great measure from the renewed interest in Biblical theology and in the Liturgy. This interest is shared by non-Catholic Christians, though not everywhere with a uniform rate of acceleration. The Bible, *e.g.*, is being seen by Protestants no longer in isolation from the spoken and personal Word of God but as the creative Word communicated to us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, working within the Church.

The proper setting for the Bible is in the heart of the Liturgy, the focal point of the Church's life. The Church is the Reader—in both senses—of the Bible. The People of God is made one—and kept one—in mind with God through the Word spoken in its midst. It is also made one, and kept one, in a special and more intimate way through the Liturgy.

The meaning of the sacraments must be seen in the light of their relation to the Word of God and to the Liturgy, the Church's life. The sacraments are not simply "means of grace." They are activities of Christ, the Head of His Mystical Body. They are actions of the Word of God in history—an active and personal Word Who reveals to us His own creative work within the Church. Through the sacraments God sends His Holy Spirit to fan into warmer flame the divine life within Christ's Mystical Body. The sacraments are an ever-present and ever-widening Pentecost.

They are not only, or even primarily, events in the life of the individual who receives them. They are first and foremost events in the corporate life of the Church. To understand the sacraments we must first understand the Church. Conversely, a false view of the sacraments blurs the image of the Church.

That is why it is so important for Christian unity to see the sacraments as they really are—in depth, not merely as so many ripples on the surface of our lives but as the inexhaustible fountain of the Word. A deeper insight into their meaning reveals more points of contact with non-Catholic theology than a superficial reading might suggest.

In his latest book Père Bouyer continues his patient and scholarly apostolate of reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant. It is an apostolate directed mainly at the enlightenment of the Catholic. Indirectly, of course, it also concerns the Protestant. Just such a per-

ceptive midwife is needed to bring to articulate birth the latent insights of Protestant theology. An unsympathetic eye would fail to see the stirrings towards Catholic truth. In this case, clarity is true charity. An optimistic and charitable interpretation must pay its own spiritual dividends.

Fr. Leeming's great treatise on "the sacraments in general" has a different function. It is technical and thorough. Yet throughout it shows its author's wide and sympathetic reading of non-Catholic literature. The sacraments are, at least in contemporary history, not only a meeting-place between God and man in charity, but also a point of contact among divided Christians at the level of theological exchange. If we have not yet sacramental intercommunion, at least we have the communion of charity. The sacraments point to our common possession, Christ: and they raise urgently the question, "What is the Church?" The most important theme of his book is undoubtedly the relation between the sacraments and the Church.

Miss Cecily Hastings' little book on the sacraments is a masterly summary of traditional teaching. Here we have the fruits of a most important development within the Church, of a lay interest in the riches of its teaching. Fr. Leeming's book is a sign of that interest and a stimulus to its increase: Miss Hastings' book is yet another vindication of it.

JAMES QUINN

### LIVY

*Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods*, by P. G. Walsh (Cambridge University Press 40s).

TO WRITE a balanced appreciation of Livy is no easy task. Not only must inveterate misconceptions about him be dispelled; an endeavour to do him justice might err also on the side of indulgence; and there is always the danger of a too narrow, too one-sided approach.

The bore of the classroom, the uncritical herald of an idealised Rome, the armchair historian in the service of Augustan propaganda have little to do with the real Livy. What, then, are we to think of the man and of his work?

Mr. Walsh invites us to judge Livy's achievement in the light of his "historical aims and methods"—which, evidently, are conditioned by his personal background, by the spirit of his age, and by the historiographical and literary traditions and conventions of the ancient world. Although building on a broad foundation of previous research, Mr. Walsh brings to his task a most engaging freshness of mind. He has read his Livy with thoroughness, detachment, and sympathetic understanding; he knows all the historian's weaknesses and even adds a few to the traditional list; but he has also penetrated the author's

mind and makes us understand him even where he cannot spare his criticism. The provincial from Padua, conservative, moralist, philosophically minded, gentleman scholar *procul negotiis*, friend (not tool) of Augustus, admirer of Rome's great past, hoping—with some misgivings like Virgil and Horace—for a revival of her old spirit; as a writer, through Cicero, heir of a centuries old theory according to which the writing of history is a form of literary art, aiming at an effect similar to that of great poetry, in particular of tragedy—how, at the hands of such a man, does history fare? Unlike most ancient historians before and after him, Livy had no personal experience of either political or military affairs; he was neither a great traveller nor too well read in geography; he was not even a scholar devoted to the search for primary evidence and to its methodical study. Inclination and facilities apart, his vast enterprise—a history of Rome from her origins to his own time—made it almost inevitable that he should limit his research to literary sources that were readily available. Some of these were excellent, for example Polybius; others, such as the annalists of Sulla's time and after, and their earlier Roman sources, were not always above suspicion. Livy does not analyse his material as a modern historian would do, but neither does he follow his authorities blindly; the unreliable Valerius Antias in particular is regularly checked against a second source. Livy, it is true, has passed on much national, class, and family prejudice, and is himself not free from such bias; but there is no evidence to show that in any degree he wilfully distorted historical truth as he knew it. Material error, on the other hand, from misinterpretation of his sources to blatant howlers, is anything but rare. In Livy's own eyes these shortcomings would not have weighed too heavily. For him the historian's task consisted primarily in laying bare the immanent meaning of history (which he conceived in the neo-stoic manner of a Poseidonios), interpreted as a moral lesson for his contemporaries. Roman stoicism as it had developed during the second and first centuries B.C. also afforded a way of accepting allegorically the numina and rites of the obsolete state religion of Rome; in this spirit Livy can, for example, relate details of the legendary dawn of Roman history without committing himself to explicit belief in their factual truth. Thus understood, even these old traditions may be claimed as *exempla*. The parallel of the *Aeneid* is obvious; not inappropriately Livy's diction, especially in the first decade, approaches that of poetry.

Stripped of its artistic and moral qualities, what claim has Livy's work to the consideration of the historian? Is it merely the greatly varying historical value of his sources? No, says Mr. Walsh, there is something more: the author's human understanding of persons and events, his art of motivation and direct or indirect characterisation.

To point this out is one of the special concerns of Mr. Walsh's book, and he does so most ardently and eloquently. I cannot help feeling, however, that at this point some qualification is indicated; and Mr. Walsh himself provides food for such thoughts. For example, Livy's moving account of the Albans leaving their city, which is destroyed under their eyes (i.29), abounds in "obvious anachronisms"; his insistence on the psychological impact of religious acts (see p. 170) contains an element of rationalising; in his voicing of the anxieties of ordinary Roman citizens on the eve of the Third Macedonian War (xlii.49) I can see little more than a skilfully developed rhetorical theme. This sort of *Einfühlung*, it seems to me, is a literary accomplishment rather than an advance towards historical interpretation; it certainly is very different from Thucydides' penetrating analysis of historical forces and personal motives, not only in those famous chapters where it is explicit and in the speeches (to call them "apposite to the occasion," is rather an understatement), but also, implicitly, throughout his work.

By pointing out all the facets of Livy's mind, of his attitude to history, and of his literary art, Mr. Walsh has proved that this much-reviled author is full of interest. As a historian, Livy still seems to me—*pace* Mr. Walsh—to be *proximus poetis*.

LUDWIG BIELER

### NOVEL HISTORY

*Destiny of Fire*, by Zoë Oldenbourg, translated by Peter Green (Gollancz 18s).

ON 10 MARCH 1208, Pope Innocent III proclaimed a crusade against a sect in Languedoc popularly called the Cathari or Albigensians, and in July his armies marched. Somewhat ironically they were the champions of tolerance against a rigorist heresy which several years of peaceful solicitation, including that of St. Bernard and St. Dominic, had failed to resolve or even to confine. These Cathars believed that all matter is evil, that Christ Himself only masqueraded as a man, that true Christians were to be found exclusively within their own sect gifted with special knowledge and purified by a life in which there was no place for sacraments, oaths, sexual intercourse or war; their way of life was based upon ascetic habits—suicide by self-starvation (called the *endura*) was not uncommon among them—Scripture, prayer meetings, and preaching of the word: in short they looked back to the Manichee and forward to the Puritan, and their austere life appealed to a people sickened by the power and venality of the orthodox clergy. Nobles and bishops were counted among them. By the crusading army they were put to the sword and,



in one of the blackest wars in history, exterminated. Of Catholic and Cathar there were, it is thought, a million dead.

About this dreadful war Miss Zoë Oldenbourg, credited by her publishers with an intimate knowledge of the time, has designed her book, and Catholics who open it, as they assuredly will, hoping to be told like Snow White's stepmother that "You are the fairest of them all" will find in it little for their comfort. To make us understand what it was like to feel and believe as a Cathar the author tells her story through the eyes of the Seigneur de Montgeil, his wife Arsen who has received Cathar baptism and become a missionary of the sect, their daughter Gentian, and their four sons; all die brutal deaths, every one, and their tale is told with a bitter passion which the massacres of Béziers and Montségur make it easy to understand: easier for readers of this century who have so many race-murders stinking in their nostrils.

For a Catholic to scold such a book may seem to be sour grapes, but it is hard to escape the view that it is vitiated by a naïve bombast which expresses itself in the prose, the characters and its version of history. Miss Oldenbourg's characters, viewed through the eyes of feminine idealism, remind one irresistibly of the accusation that whenever a Hollywood director wishes to express spirituality he launches an insipid blonde upon the screen. They meet disaster with eyes raised to heaven, rebuff temptation like clockwork soldiers, gaze at each other through liquid eyes that easily brim with tears, and speak in a kind of double-pulpit dialogue, each little spiritual capsule embedded in a cottonwool padding of nineteenth-century catch-phrases. They do not breathe, they do not convince, and this lack of convincingness is paralleled on the historical level. The author omits important facts like the years of attempted peaceful conversion and the assassination of the Papal Legate which triggered the war, and she edges the damnable doctrines of the Cathari (which outlawed them in Islam as well as in Christendom) into the shadows of her story in order to emphasise those qualities which we associate with the homely and homespun Mid-Western puritan. On the other side the Catholics are made to seem more directly manipulated by Rome than they were or could have been, without regard for the problems of information and communication which inevitably led to political and religious re-alignments of loyalty rivalling those of the Spanish Civil War. Perhaps this would be no great matter if we were not wryly aware looking back at novels like *Westward Ho* and *The Three Musketeers* or a poem like *The Revenge* that the dyes of the fictioneer have coloured the popular view of history more indelibly than the delicate essences of the laborious historian. A book like Miss Helen Prescott's *The Man on a Donkey* in which personal drama is never allowed to distort the wider historical issues, is a rarity.

With all its faults, however, this book does make the point that Miss Oldenbourg, one presumes, chiefly wishes to make—that violence is not an argument; you may level your heretic but his voice goes on echoing to be heard, and your own moral and intellectual stature is diminished. That of course does not resolve the problem how to deal with men who are rational but not reasonable. When they accept philosophies which are mad and bad do we suffer the damage they do, as we suffer tornadoes which play havoc before they blow themselves out? It is an unresolved dilemma as acute now in Laos or Cuba as it ever was in Languedoc, and it is a sobering thought that the real moral of the book is not that Catholics are quick to summon up the engines of fire, sword and inquisition, but that in war passion outruns mercy and that no pope, general or statesman can set limits to the passion of his fighting men. Secondly, that the faith is least safe when it fails to challenge man's innate desire for sacrifice. That thought may be our best response to such a book, that and our prayers for the souls of the dead.

J. F. X. HARRIOTT

#### ON READING SCRIPTURE

*The Meaning of Sacred Scripture*, by Louis Bouyer, translated M. P. Ryan (Darton, Longman and Todd 35s).

*The Spiritual Teaching of the New Testament*, by Jules Lebreton, S.J., translated by James Whalen (Burns and Oates 42s).

*Enjoying the New Testament*, by Margaret Monro. Second edition. (Longmans, 10s 6d).

*Reading the Word of God*, by Lawrence Dannemiller, S.S. (Burns and Oates 21s).

MANY WHO START to read the Old Testament are a little scandalised thereby. If this is the inspired word of God, why is there so much imperfection described? It is only a partial answer to say that it is an account of the Old Covenant—an imperfect religion. With the imperfect but developing religion goes a partial revelation, in which we can distinguish many stages. The religious understanding of the Chosen People progressed from the ideas of Law of Moses, through the more profound perceptions of the Prophets to the more reflective teaching of the return from Exile (as in Job, the Canticle of Canticles and the later Isaías) and finally to the latest books of the old Testament which indicate doctrines such as the Resurrection of the Body not to be found at all in earlier Hebrew teaching.

It helps in our reading to remember that the books were written at more or less advanced stages of revelation. But the difficulty remains: why, if all these stages of the religious education of the Israelites have

been finally superseded by the Christian Revelation, should we not confine ourselves to reading the New Testament? Fr. Bouyer gives several answers to this question.

The Old Testament is the story of God's personal dealings with His people. The value of the story is that, in fashioning His people, God reveals His own attributes. We can study these as we follow threads of doctrine through the various stages of the Old Testament. The very important idea of the Covenant, for instance, is first introduced when the Israelites are still tempted to idolatry, and we should not expect at this early stage to find a very deep understanding, which does come later through the prophets.

The gift of wisdom is also the subject of a very strange development. The idea has a very lowly origin, as we observe in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, where it is based on the traditions of Egyptian scribes and others, adapted so as to be free of idolatry and superstition, and leading to the idea of the service of God. From this apparently unpromising start, the Hebrew idea of Wisdom, developed in many books, for example, in Job, becomes a very profound one. We can understand St. James's Epistle more easily in the light of this thread of doctrine through Israelite history.

The first purpose of our reading of Scripture must be to nourish not our intellectual life but our affections and our attitude to Christ Whom we come to know in the Scriptures and to the way of life which He teaches us. Fr. Lebreton's work is a very thorough study of the New Testament from this point of view. He follows a scheme which would make a good course of retreat reading. He examines first what the New Testament teaches on our attitude to God's Providence and Fatherly care of us, then what we should feel concerning sin and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The rest of the book deals with the life of Christ and what our affections should be in meditating His Life, Death and Resurrection.

The new edition of Miss Monro's book is very welcome. It can be warmly recommended to anyone who wishes to undertake for the first time a systematic reading of the New Testament. The author warns us that reading her book is not a substitute for reading Scripture itself. Perhaps the warning is necessary; it would be possible to read through this attractive introduction without following the suggested course of reading. This would be a pity, because the book is a very helpful guide to a first reading, containing notes on questions which might create difficulties for the readers, for example, on the differences between Pharisee and Sadducee, on the different accounts of the same incidents in the Evangelists, on the meaning of the word "Testament" in St. Paul.

Fr. Dannemiller's book is an aid to the reading of the Bible of a

different kind. It is intended for groups who wish to read the Bible together, and is in the form of a handbook for the leader of the group. It contains 150 short "services," each comprising three readings, together with Psalms and Canticles which are intended to be recited by the whole group together. The readings are chosen from different books of the Bible to illustrate one theme, and the book contains very short introductions to the readings with concluding prayers. There is an index which makes the book more easily adapted to the groups' needs.

R. WOODHALL

## SHORTER NOTICES

*Secular Institutes: Consecration to God and Life in the World*, by J. M. Perrin, O.P. Translated by Roger Capel (Geoffrey Chapman 10s 6d).

THE NAME "Secular Institutes," like the hard, dull oyster shell, gives no hint of the hidden pearl within. Yet this name, chosen specifically by the late Pope Pius XII, does signify the special role in the Church of these groups of dedicated people, priests and laity. They are *Secular*. That is, their vocation is *in the world*, their apostolate is for the world and they live according to the ordinary ways of the world. They are *Institutes*. That is, they are autonomous groups who voluntarily dedicate themselves by the evangelical counsels to an apostolate which varies according to the nature and aims of the Institute.

Fr. Perrin's book is most welcome, for he writes, not for legalists, but for those wishing to discover the inner theological foundation of Secular Institutes. He calls his reflections "a loving effort to assimilate the thoughts of the Church in the Apostolic Constitution *Provida Mater* (1947) and *Primo Feliciter* (1948)," both of which documents are, fortunately, appended.

The sub-title, "Consecration to God and Life in the World," specifies more clearly, the author's treatment of the subject. It is a pity that the original French phrase, *présence au monde* is almost untranslatable, for it implies much more than "life in the world"—for *présence* suggests being a witness in the milieu in which one lives, a witness to Christian values and to the presence of Christ Himself in the world. In a spontaneous, meditative manner, Fr. Perrin shows how this apparent paradox of a dedicated life in the world can be lived and lived joyfully. With his strong "ecclesial" mentality he also makes us very conscious of the "Church's motherly love for her children

entering on the way of perfection . . . for these consecrated members of hers are closely bound to Christ her Bridegroom, and they occupy a place at the very heart of her life."

Theirs is a new role in the life of the Church, "living the Gospel right in the world, remaining there to receive and become the vehicle of Christ." And since "new wine is not put into old bottles," this new vocation, this new "state of perfection" must develop its own new ways adaptable to its aims. Hence, though the evangelical counsels are practised, they are actualised in ways very different from those of religious. The bond, however, is no less real, no less whole-hearted. Indeed, a vocation to a lifetime apostolate in the midst of the world demands a profound personal attachment to Christ and a serious theological formation, for they must learn to be, as Pope Pius XII says, "the salt, the light and the leaven of the world."

It is to help those striving to live this vocation that this book is specially directed, but it could be read with profit by all interested in the working of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Fr. Perrin is well served by his translator, Roger Capel, and is very ably introduced by Fr. Gabriel Reidy, O.F.M., whose own interest in Secular Institutes is very evident.

*Worship in the World's Religions*, by Geoffrey Parrinder (Faber 21s).

**I**N OUR materialist western society it is common to meet people who say they have no religion; and, while we may regret this, it hardly occurs to us to regard them as abnormal. Yet that is just what they are, as may be seen in the light of the facts set forth in this very interesting book. They seem to be hardly human, since they lack something here shown as characteristic of mankind as a whole—namely a belief in, and a personal reaction to, some power or powers above the human plane calling for man's adoration.

Dr. Parrinder has succeeded in collecting an enormous amount of information about the living religions of the world, and in presenting it systematically and intelligibly. He is not concerned to assess the truth, or lack of it, to be found in the various religious systems; nor does he deal, except incidentally, with their origins or historical development, the lives of their founders, reformers and the like. His main concern is with worship as it is actually viewed and practised by the adherents of all the main religions of the world. We are told what they do in their worship, and why they do it; we see the impact of religion on human lives and the formation of cultures.

The particular angle from which this worship is studied is that of the laity; it is not priestly ritual but rather what the layman sees and hears and does that is described. And so various practices of private devotion, pilgrimages to shrines and temples, and religious customs in



the home are mentioned in addition to the main forms of public worship. All this makes the book very different from the usual study of comparative religion, and enriches it with information not available elsewhere.

The first part of the book deals with those religions which have no scriptures; most of them are to be found in Africa. Then come the religions which cherish sacred books—Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and others distributed throughout India, Southern Asia and the Far East. Finally there are chapters on Islam, Judaism and various forms of Christianity. Of the adequacy and accuracy of the accounts of non-Christian religions no one could give any worth-while opinion unless he knew as much about the subject as does the author—and there must be very few who are so widely read. But at least it may be said that one gets the impression of a very well informed, balanced and sympathetic approach. This is confirmed by the chapters on Christianity which, though necessarily condensed, seem well proportioned and bring out the main outlines of Christian worship clearly enough. The small section devoted to Catholic worship, for instance, is marred by none of those glaring inaccuracies, misunderstandings or distortions all too frequently to be discovered in books written by those not of our faith; while the author has no space to write much about us, what he has written is good.

*The Master Calls: A Handbook of Christian Living*, by Fritz Tillman (Helicon Press, Baltimore \$5.00).

A COMMON CARICATURE of the moralist is to present him as a man engaged in splitting hairs, in finding loopholes in the law, as one more concerned with the letter than with the spirit. The moralists I have encountered have been quite unlike this, and it seems that the better the moralist, the less is he like this caricature. Certainly the present book gives the lie to any grain of truth there may have been in such a representation, for the author presents morals as they really are, namely a positive guide for living with God. He says, "The Saviour rarely mentioned transgressions of the laws of God, because with the child of God the obvious need not be stressed. Instead, Jesus stressed purity of moral activity through purity of intention."

The general plan of the book reveals at once the spirit that informs it. There is no list of commandments which we must avoid breaking. Rather there are the positive precepts of the love of God; the love of self in the sense of giving to ourselves, and to our bodies, that care which is due to what we have on trust from God; the love of our neighbour as an individual; and the love of our neighbour corporately as the community. Asceticism, which is so often presented as a negative

thing, a mere giving up of something, is revealed as an exercise for "increasing the efficiency of the moral energies for ever greater conquests." The body, which is so often portrayed as a somewhat regrettable appendage encumbering the soul, is spoken of as "the companion of the soul. Only when a body is united with a soul does a man exist, and it remains the companion of the soul for all eternity." Virginity, which is rarely successfully dealt with without implying some disparagement of marriage, is discussed in itself, not depending for its glory on being better than an inferior state.

It is of course possible in a book so large to find some points concerning which there might have been greater clarity and precision of expression. The nature of contraception is a case in point. But as a whole the book is a pleasure to read, and will be a source of great enlightenment to those whose concepts of morality have hitherto been encompassed in the phrase "Thou shalt not."

*The Mystical Rose, Thoughts on the Blessed Virgin from the Writings of Cardinal J. H. Newman*, edited by J. Regina, S.T.D. (St. Paul Publications 9s 6d).

TWO FACTS are related of that great devotee of Mary, Mother Margaret Hallahan, one, that she carried about with her always, in a little purse, a paper on which were written a few sentences of Newman's about Our Lady; the other, that she could not bear to hear read in her refectory, even in Newman's prose, examples of Catholic excesses in devotion to the Blessed Virgin, which his controversy with Pusey compelled him to mention and reject "with grief and almost anger." These two small details illustrate the piety and soundness of Newman's writing on Our Lady, so that it is an excellent idea of the Society of St. Paul to make an anthology of the chief passages about her, in his works. The selections come from the *Letter to Pusey* (*Difficulties of Anglicans*, II), from the last two among the *Sermons to Mixed Congregations*, and from *Meditations and Devotions*. Perhaps room might have been found for one or two eloquent passages in the Anglican sermons, since, years before the Oxford Movement began, Hurrell Froude had "fixed deep in Newman the idea of devotion to the Blessed Virgin."

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ONE of the great occupational risks of business life under the pressure of to-day is that the practical man of affairs neglects his outside reading, and all too easily falls into a narrow circle of immediate preoccupations. There is always loss in this, and the Catholic business or professional man, as a member of the Church Universal, has a particularly strong reason for keeping his mind open to wider horizons. Certainly it was never more necessary than now to follow world happenings. A direct chain of causes and effects ties every business to economical changes in the world, which are themselves as often the consequence as the cause of changes in men's political and social ideas. These ideas in their turn come out of the religions, or irreligions, of contemporary man.

In many countries the Catholic Church is at the heart of the battle of ideas. Cardinal Manning's saying that "all great quarrels between men are at bottom theological" suggests that there is, in fact, no better starting-point or background for understanding the modern world than a Catholic one. Because of this approach and background

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